

# A very successful Montreal Process Meeting

In February 1995 ten non-European temperate countries, including New Zealand, endorsed the "Santiago Declaration", a common set of national level criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of their forests. The meeting, held in New Zealand over late October and early November, was the first since endorsing that declaration.

The interest from overseas countries was very high: in the end there were 50 representatives from 25 countries. Of special significance was the presence of representatives from dominant tropical timber producers Brazil and Malaysia as well as the delegation from South Africa. The New Zealand forestry industry, NGOs and the public sector were also strongly represented.

The three main aims we wanted to achieve were to progress the Montreal Process objectives, familiarise the overseas visitors with our approaches to sustainable management of forests and to hear from the visitors the developments taking place in the international arena. The two-day meeting in Auckland and the four-day field trip that followed helped achieve these objectives admirably.

Perhaps the key issues are best summed up by the coordinator of the Montreal Process, David Brand, Director General, Science and Sustainable Development, Canadian Forest Service, who made the following comments:

*"I learned a great deal from the field trip. What struck me the most is how much innovation we saw. Not only in governments creating an environment that has been conducive to private investment and the creation of new wealth (the holy grail of all governments), but also in the management of the rimu and natural beech forests of New Zealand. While it seems that New Zealand still has some challenges related to the conservation of your native biodiversity in the face of exotic pests, your model of sustainability appears both viable and socially responsible."*

This and other comments made it quite clear that we have to make improvements to pest management in our protected natural forests to ensure that New Zealand's forests are considered to be sustainably managed at a national level. Other comments, applying rigour to the "dual estate" model, are directed at whether New Zealand will be able to defend the practice of clear cutting its planted forests.

Without doubt the meeting was a great

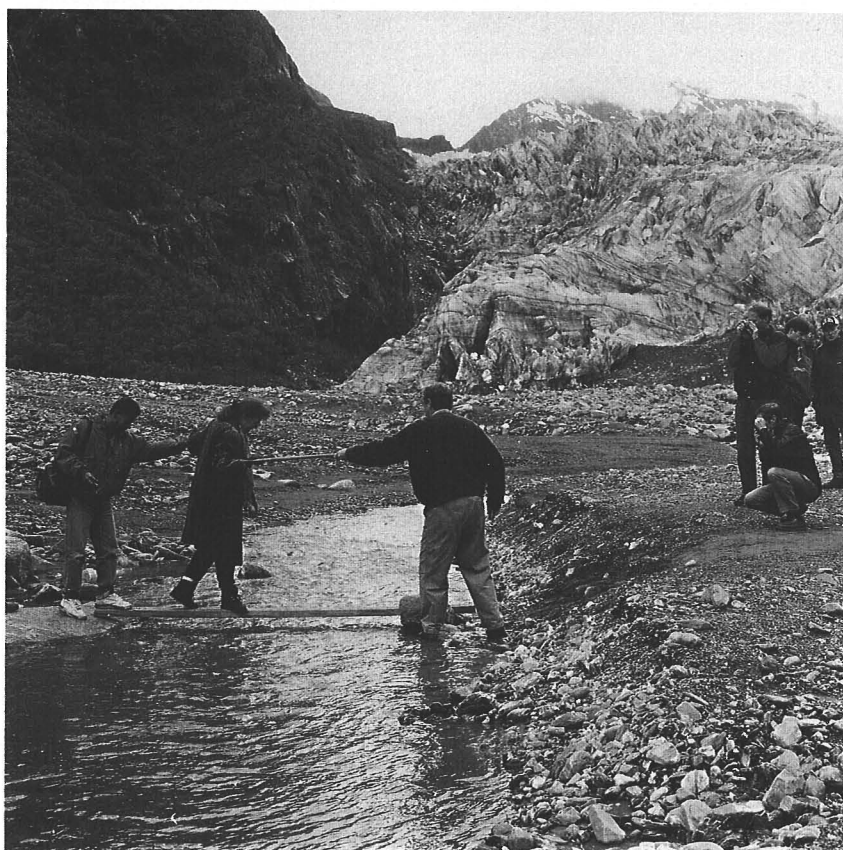


The Montreal Process group in the NZFRI Nursery "GTI Walk" with guide Tony Firth, experiencing first-hand the significant contribution that genetic research has made to the plantation resource in New Zealand.

success both in terms of progressing the Montreal Process objectives and in providing participants with a broad overview

of the New Zealand forest sector.

**Dave Allen and Don Wijewardana**



Sustainability, criteria and indicators were no doubt pushed to one side for many field-trip members as they negotiated single plank bridges and a bouldery morass on a walk to the Fox Glacier. For some it was a first experience with a river of ice! An advancing glacier also puts "sustainability" into perspective. Photo: Ian Platt, Ministry of Forestry