

port costs in recent years meant that the South Island West Coast and the Nelson/Marlborough regions could be justifiably regarded as being the same geographic market. The commission notes that transporting logs adds significantly to their costs - e.g. about \$6 per tonne more from Westland to Nelson than sending them to Canterbury. While costs have fallen in recent years and there is some trade in logs between the regions, the costs are still high and the flow of logs relatively small.

Hence the commission concluded that the relevant market was that for the supply of logs in Nelson/Marlborough. Weyerhaeuser's view was that the region was a net importer of logs and that because of greater demand and the proximity of an export port, log prices were higher than in a market where demand and supply were more in balance.

The commission says it found concerns on the part of some sawmillers in the region about the likely effect of the proposal on their ability to obtain logs on acceptable terms. Several indicated their view that logs supplied to independent sawmillers in the region were more expensive than logs available to sawmillers in other regions of New Zealand.

Although the commissioned concluded there would be some competitive constraint on Weyerhaeuser from the increased production expected by other forest owners and other resources available outside the region, these would not be sufficient to offset the market power likely to result from the high degree of market concentration for logs.

## NEFD maps the changing shape of planted forests

The changing shape of New Zealand's planted production forests is reflected in the National Exotic Forest Description (NEFD). Published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) in February 1999 the NEFD provides a summarised inventory of the country's planted production forest resources based on surveys to 1 April 1998.

Compiled from surveys of forest owners and consultants who own, manage or administer planted production forests, the NEFD document includes

detailed statistics in tables and graphs on the planted area of land by wood supply region and territorial authority across New Zealand. A section includes details for each NEFD species group, naturally dominated by Radiata pine, showing the forest area for each territorial authority by five-year age classes.

The figures show that the area of planted production forest grew by 3 per cent to an estimated 1.68 million hectares as at 1 April 1998. Seventy one per cent of the area was in the North Island and 29 per cent in the South Island, with 33 per cent of the total being in the Central North Island wood supply region.

While Radiata pine makes up 90 per cent of the total planted forest area, the area of Douglas fir, the next most common species at 5 per cent, expanded 7.5 per cent to 75,000 hectares. The area of planted Radiata pine has increased at a lower rate of just under 3 per cent but on a much larger area of 1,520,000 hectares.

About 65 per cent of the Radiata pine planted forest is, or is expected to be, pruned to a height of at least four metres. This proportion has been increasing, with higher proportions in the 1 to 20-year age classes than in the age classes older than 20 years.

While about 24 per cent of the Radiata pine estate is production thinned, the data shows a large increase in the area of forests classed as "unpruned without production thinning" (up 26 per cent to 461,000 hectares). The area of forest "unpruned with production thinning" fell by 52.5 per cent to 68,000 hectares, while those areas pruned (with or without production thinning) remained static.

Younger age groups predominate in the planted forest resource, with 62 per cent being 15 years old or younger as a result of increased planting levels from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, and the high rates of new planting since 1992.

The area of new planting was down by 24 per cent in the year ended 31 March 1998, to 63,700 hectares. The area restocked actually increased by just over 5 per cent to 29,700 hectares.

The volume of plantation roundwood harvested increased by 4.6 per cent to more than 16.6 million cubic metres. The bulk of the roundwood removals (15.6 million cubic metres) came from clear felling 32,4000 hectares of planted forests and a million cubic metres from production thinning.

An electronic copy of the NEFD report is available on the MAF Internet site: [www.maf.govt.nz/forestry](http://www.maf.govt.nz/forestry)

## Promoting the charms of the Cypress

Promoting cypresses in the country almost totally dominated by Radiata pine might seem the greatest of uphill battles but Stephen Brailsford isn't about to be beaten back.

Brailsford has recently produced "The Cypress Grower's Handbook" to help better inform potential growers of the benefits available from the species. His company, Brailsford's Forest Management Ltd has established and managed a substantial resource of cypresses, including research properties on Banks Peninsula and in the Buller region.

The handbook notes that cypresses have been planted commercially in New Zealand for 70 years and there were about 3,400 hectares in plantations by 1986, excluding shelterbelts. A surge in interest in cypresses in the past few years has seen significant plantings, with establishment programmes leading to 1,000 hectares and 1,500 hectares being planted in 1993 and 1994 respectively.

Brailsford says that cypresses are among the most valuable softwoods traded on the international market with strong demand in Asia. Stumpages for macrocarpa are said to be usually about twice those paid for Radiata pine logs of the same quality.

The main cypresses likely to be grown are macrocarpa and lusitanica, and the handbook notes that timber from the former has a good reputation in New Zealand.

Brailsford reports good interest in the handbook, which includes management regimes and an economic analysis for potential growers. He says his intention is to update the handbook on a regular basis so that the industry can be kept up to date on cypress developments, research findings, management options, cultivars and seedlots available.

### Change of Status and Resignations

The following Registered Forestry Consultants have changed their status to Registered Member:

Owen Cox	Wellington
Steve Strand	Wellington

The following Registered Forestry Consultants have resigned from the consultants scheme:

Colin McKenzie	Auckland
Geddes Ramsay	Invercargill