

# New NEFD shows forest area growth continues

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MAF Policy

The *National Exotic Forest Description as at 1 April 2001 Report* was published recently by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The 2001 report is based on a full survey of forest owners and consultants who own, manage or administer more than 40 hectares of planted production forests.

The figures show that the area of planted production forest grew by about 2 per cent (30 000 hectares) to 1.80 million hectares as at 1 April 2001. Thirty-two per cent of the entire planted forest estate is in the Central North Island wood supply region. Other regions with significant areas of maturing forests are Northland, Gisborne, Hawkes Bay, Southern North Island, Nelson & Marlborough and Otago & Southland.

Radiata pine (1.61 million hectares) makes up 89 per cent of the total planted forest area; the area of Douglas-fir, the next most common species, has increased by almost nine per cent to 103 000 hectares, six per cent of the total estate.

About 67 per cent (1.07 million hectares) of the Radiata pine planted forest estate is, or is expected to be, pruned to a height of at least four metres. This figure has dropped from 70 per cent in the previous year; the decrease is most noticeable in the 1 to 10-year age class, with 67 per cent of the Radiata pine resources categorised as pruned or intended to be pruned, compared to 73 per cent in the previous year.

Approximately 22 per cent of the Radiata pine planted forests are production thinned; however, this figure has also declined in recent years: in 1995, 28 per cent of the Radiata pine forests were, or were intended to be, production thinned. Production thinning of the Radiata

pine resource has decreased in the Central North Island wood supply region from 65 per cent of the Radiata pine resource in 1995 to 36 per cent in 2001.

Over the last two years the rate of new planting has declined below the long-term average rate. The area of new planting in 2000 was 33,600 hectares and it is provisionally estimated that 31,600 hectares were planted in 2001. The average new planting rate over the last 30 years has been 45,200 hectares per year. Between 1992 and 1998 New Zealand experienced high afforestation rates. During these six years new planting rates averaged 69,000 hectares per year.

In addition to this new planting, 35,700 hectares of harvested area was replanted in 2000, making total planting 69,300 hectares. The area of restocking is expected to continue to increase in line with forecast increases in future harvesting.

An estimated 19.0 million cubic metres of roundwood were harvested from New Zealand's planted production forests in the year ended 31 March 2001. An estimated 18.3 million cubic metres came from clear felling 38,000 hectares of planted forest, and 0.7 million cubic metres from production thinning. Significant areas of forest established in the 1970s are now maturing and are expected to be harvested over the next decade.

An electronic copy of this report is available on the New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Internet Site: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/forestry>. The tables from this electronic report can be downloaded directly into Microsoft Excel. Printed copies of the report are available from the MAF Information Bureau, Wellington and cost \$35 each.

## international news

### In search of excellence in forest management

Paul Lane

In January this year members of the Institute of Forestry were written to and asked to nominate New Zealand examples of exemplary forest management. Nominations received by the NZIF will be forwarded to the Asia-Pacific Regional Office of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). Through this sustainable forest management initiative, FAO intends to produce a report that lists nominated examples of exemplary forest management. The FAO report will also contain case studies on a small number of nominated forests. These case study forests will be further documented with a view to highlighting these among United Nation member countries. In the background material distributed by FAO they state:

*In the drive towards sustainable forest management there has been continuous improvement in the management of many forest areas in the Asia-Pacific region. In Search of Excellence aims to document specific examples of this improvement. A great deal of attention has been focused on poor forest management, deforestation and degradation of forests. There has*

*been far less recognition of the many positive instances of improved forest management. FAO believes that part of the process of striving for improvement is to promote examples of success. This serves as a means of disseminating good ideas and as a source of encouragement to achieve better forest management. In Search of Excellence seeks to identify: A broad cross-section of instances of exemplary forest management in Asia-Pacific; forests that can be held up as examples of forest management that shows promise for the future. These may be forests that have a long history of good management, or be forests that have implemented innovative systems to improve management outcomes examples across a broad range of forest eco-types from many countries in the region, exemplifying management for a variety of objectives and under a variety of different ownership structures; examples of both large and small forest areas – the key requirement is quality of management.*

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