

Social licence to operate

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Several papers in this May 2019 issue are in response to the Government's 'one billion tree' proposal, discussing the forest sector's licence to operate, interaction with Māori landowners, and the perception of the industry by the media and general public. The proposal has received a large amount of publicity and comments, some very positive from the production forest sector, imagining large areas of new planting and a consequent increase in the long-term sustainable harvest. There has also been negative pushback, with doom-laden predictions of forests of pine blanketing the landscape, loss of rural communities, and more catastrophes with clear-felling and logging slash.

One billion trees sounds a lot, even over a decade. When written as 1,000,000,000 it reads even bigger. If all of the trees were used for production forest afforestation, and the new planting was assumed to occur at 1,100 trees/ha, then this would imply just over 900,000 ha added to the existing national forest estate after 10 years, indeed a very significant increase. With another assumption that forest productivity increases to 25 m³/ha/year due to the recent increases in final crop stocking, and to tree improvement from breeding, this one billion trees would increase the national long-term sustainable yield by between 22 and 23 million m³ (or tonnes) per year.

However, it was made clear that the one billion included replanting any harvested areas. It is by no means certain that replanting would be carried out for all the existing plantations, especially all of the large area of forest planted in the boom period of the early 1990s by farmers and small-scale forest investors. Whether this would occur will depend on whether the non-corporate owner makes as much cash as they were expecting, or if they decide that the whole exercise barely broke even and wasn't worth the trouble.

The Ministry for Primary Industries 2016 Wood Availability Forecast suggests that in the next decade there will be a harvest of some 35 million m³/year, based on model predictions with a 'smooth' annual harvest. At an average of, say, 550 m³/ha harvested, this would imply, in round figures, that 63,000 ha is to be logged and replanted each year. At a planting density of 1,100 trees/ha, this will require 700 million trees in the next decade, well over half a billion. (These are very approximate calculations.)

It has also been stated that two-thirds of the remaining target for new planting is to be with native trees. This would imply 10 million trees/year for new

planting in radiata (mainly), or say 9,000 ha/year, which is not really very much new production forest, especially when the recent-past conversion to dairy farms is taken into account. Even so, it is a welcome change in attitude from the Government, particularly when coupled with the re-establishment of the government forest agency, Te Uru Rākau.

In this issue, Edwards et al. lead with a paper about forestry's licence to operate, concluding that '... there is an imperative to gain acceptance for these "resource operations"'. Social risks and uncertainties must be adequately addressed.' Velarde et al. discuss lessons for policy design learnt from the Erosion Control Funding Programme on the East Coast, suggesting that following adaptive governance principles is necessary for afforestation schemes. Both these papers are supported by the refereed paper from Bayne et al. who examined articles published online between January and September 2018 from mainstream media outlets, including newspapers. The forest sector is described as a poor cousin in terms of the media, lacking 'standing', and seen as the main causer of the log debris flow outcomes. The authors state that the sector needs to build strong relationships with the New Zealand media.

In other papers, Erica Kinder discusses 'Where to for Wood Councils?' and Telfer et al. explain factors affecting the genetic worth of a radiata pine stand over its rotation. John Stulen provides an update on building using mass timber (or engineered timber), including cross-laminated timber (CLT), laminated veneer lumber (LVL) and glue-laminated timber (GLT), citing advantages over conventional, high-energy demanding steel and concrete. In New Zealand, its use is still held back by deficiencies in the codified engineering guidance available for practising engineers. The Government could help by providing support for such guidance and by insisting on using mass timber for new public sector construction. It is thrilling to see that Air New Zealand will use engineered timber to build what will be the world's biggest single-span timber-arch aircraft hangar, one-and-a-half times the size of their largest existing hangar.

John Purey-Cust provides the 'Last word', querying New Zealand production forestry's virtual dependence on one species and the reliance on log exports. He states that both threaten the public view of the industry, an opinion from a retired forestry professional arrived at independently of the authors of the first three papers in this issue.

The Forest Newsfeed:

COMMUNICATING FORESTRY IN THE CONNECTED AGE

Book yourself out ...

... 25–28 August 2019!

The combined Australian and New Zealand Forestry Conference occurs every four years on New Zealand soil. It provides an excellent forum for forestry professionals to meet and exchange ideas, and an excellent opportunity for companies and organisations to sponsor events and activities that benefit the profession.

Highlights of our conference programme all housed on-site at the University of Canterbury:

- International and nationally based keynote speakers and presenters
- CPD sessions
- NZIF and IFA Annual General Meetings
- AGM networking drinks sponsored by CBRE Ltd
- Women in Forestry working breakfast
- Future Foresters Mentoring/Mentoree session
- Future Foresters Quiz Night sponsored by IFS Growth Ltd
- Student posters, on-site voting
- Not to be missed field trips
- Two fabulous post-conference tour options
- Networking opportunities throughout the catering breaks held within the exhibition area
- Prestigious Awards dinner

Women in forestry

Women in Forestry welcome you to attend their annual event 'This working breakfast'. The event will start with tea/coffee and a presentation from Julie Collins, Deputy Director-General Forestry New Zealand and Head of Te Uru Rākau. Julie is a leader in the forestry sector, with a Bachelor of Forestry Science and more than 30 years' experience in forestry and land-use policy.

All are welcome to attend this event (irrespective of gender!) and hear an inspirational woman in forestry speak about her involvement in the sector over the years. Following the presentation, a glorious buffet.

Field trips

The conference presentations and field trip will show how forest managers are meeting the challenge of communicating the roles that forests can play in a modern economy, and engaging with those who represent the changing societal needs from forests. Topics will include impacts of public perceptions on forest management activities, fire management, future career skills in a changing world and the formulation of government policies that impact on forestry.



Sponsorship

The sponsorship prospectus is located on the conference website. Please review opportunities for your organisation to be included in the ANZIF conference.

Conference updates – registration

The conference organising committee is working hard to secure and finalise all details for the conference – please keep an eye on the conference website for updates. Registration along with accommodation options will be live shortly.

Contact

For further information please do not hesitate to contact our Conference Managers:

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