

Certification gets closer

After 18 months of deliberation, a draft national standard for the sustainable management of plantation forests in NZ has been released for public consultation.

The draft is open for public comment until 7 February 2003. Once submissions are summarised, a new standard will be drafted for further consultation and field testing, before finally being sent to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) for endorsement.

Coordinator of the National Initiative Working Group (NIWG), Bill Dyck, says market access for New Zealand forest products will improve once FSC has endorsed the national standard.

"With the FSC label to stamp on New Zealand wood products, we can expect better access to new markets.

"For instance, some of the larger stores in the United States and the UK are asking for wood from sustainably managed forests – companies like Home Depot, Lowes and B&Q. These are huge organisations whose annual turnover is bigger than New Zealand's total GDP," says Dyck.

"Clearly this initiative is market-driven, but there are other advantages. Having a national standard will obviously improve the environmental performance of the industry.

"And on the social side, the standard will ensure improved health and safety conditions for workers, public access to forests,

protection of Maori cultural values, and employment for local people."

He says four key stakeholder groups were represented on the national working group – economic, environmental, Maori and social – to ensure the impact of forestry operations was considered on all levels.

NZ Forest Owners Association chief executive Rob McLagan says the implementation of a national standard is a significant step for the New Zealand forest industry.

He says the process of developing the draft standard has been achieved in a spirit of good will amongst all the interests.

"I think this can be seen as a positive outcome of the good relationship between the forest industry and environmental organisations as a result of the signing of the Forest Accord 10 years ago.

"After the new standards have been finally endorsed, we look forward to working with the other major stakeholders groups – Maori, environmental and social – in promoting New Zealand pine products internationally."

McLagan encourages all those with an interest in forest management to send in their comments on the draft.

For a copy of the draft national standard, visit www.nzcertification.com, or contact Bill Dyck, email billdyck@xtra.co.nz



Fletcher Challenge Forests

A national standard will improve market access for New Zealand forest products

NZFOA opposes ACC rates increase

ACC rates for forestry and logging look set to rise by 19 per cent in 2003/2004 – one of the highest percentage increases for any industry.

NZFOA chief executive, Rob McLagan, told ACC in October that the Association is strongly opposed to the proposed increase, particularly given the number of improvements made to safety in forestry operations.

The Forest Safe campaign introduced five years ago and the Alcohol and Drug Programme have both had encouraging results, he said.

McLagan also requested a change in the composition of forestry and logging 'risk groups', so farmers and weekend firewood collectors were not included.

"Because of their relative unfamiliarity with the potential danger of this type of work, and their lack of training, their accident rate is far higher than those working in the industry."

Yet, under ACC's risk group system, he says commercial forest growers must meet the higher levy rates arising from farmer and other non-commercial operators' accidents.

McLagan requested the issue be seriously and urgently examined, with a view to separating commercial and non-commercial forestry related accidents.

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In my view

Working together on forestry

There are positive signs that the forest industry is moving towards a more collaborative approach to industry-wide issues beyond the traditional fire, forest health and safety, and training.

The NZ Forest Service used to coordinate a wide range of industry activities before the Government sold off its extensive forest holdings in the late 1980s.

Since the service was abolished, and MoF and MAF were merged, forest owners have tended to operate in greater isolation from each other in a more commercial and competitive environment. Although there have been ad hoc and useful efforts at generic market promotion, most companies do their own thing.

Now the mood of the industry seems to be changing. The retiring CEO of Fletcher Challenge Forests, Terry McFadgeman, recently made a strong plea for the industry to work more closely together, particularly in international marketing. More recently, at the company's AGM, Sir Dryden Spring made a similar suggestion.

Other evidence of the industry's desire to work more co-operatively in non-traditional

areas include:

- The decision to establish the Wood Quality Initiative
- The collaborative marketing activities in the expanding Indian market
- The formation of an industry marketing committee
- Discussions about an industry levy to fund industry good activities
- The development of draft national standards for the sustainable management of the exotic plantation estates.
- Renewed interest in industry efforts to promote forestry more widely.

Many of these initiatives will require a substantial amount of industry-wide funding.

Part of the answer could lie in carbon sink credits. The industry has acknowledged but not necessarily agreed with the Government

taking ownership of the carbon sink credits for the First Commitment Period.

In recognition of the role of forest owners in creating these credits, we believe a proportion of the value should be channeled back to the industry for industry-good activities (see article, page 3).

The funds generated from the return of the surplus carbon sink credits would go a long way to fund common industry activities in marketing and research in particular. This concept is now under active discussion between the NZ Forest Owners Association, NZ Forest Industries Council and the Government and its officials.

The winners from such an arrangement would be both the industry and the country – the industry from improvements in the quality of the fibre and higher returns from the markets; the country from higher foreign exchange earnings, a boost to regional development, and the creation of even more forest sinks.

The industry is getting its own act together; it is now looking to the Government to release a portion of the industry generated sink funds to make sure this progress continues. ■

Local government

Local Government Bill ill-conceived

The Local Government Bill is an ideological mishmash which will result in increased local government expenditure and higher rates, Rob McLagan told a group of local government finance managers recently.

Speaking in his role as chair of the Local Government Forum, McLagan said the way the bill has been drafted, the finance managers' role will be increasingly important because of the "unfortunate combination of increased powers and weaker financial provisions".

"The proposed bill is the biggest constitutional change this country has seen for many years.

"But rather than providing New Zealand with an excellent platform for economic growth

and for the delivery of modern and efficient local government services, it has emerged as an ideological mishmash which will result in more bureaucracy and higher costs."

As chief executive of the NZ Forest Owners Association, McLagan says he is concerned that the bill will inevitably lead to even higher rates for forest owners.

"It also fails to address real issues about inadequate funding for the necessary roading

infrastructure, and does not address the often costly and time consuming local government consent processes, such as those relating to resource management applications."

He says the Local Government Forum – whose aim is to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the local government sector – is urging the Government to withdraw the bill.

"The Government needs to sit down with all interested parties, including ratepayers, and examine the role of local government and local government funding from a first principles basis." ■

PPC – not in our backyard

The NZ Forest Owners Association (NZFOA) and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) are joining forces to pre-empt an attack by one of the biggest biosecurity risks to radiata pine plantations – Pine Pitch Canker. (PPC).

A joint NZFOA/MAF workshop will be held in February 2003 to review current knowledge and control systems, and develop a strategy and action plan to deal with the threat of the disease.

While not yet established in New Zealand, Pine Pitch Canker (PPC) has caused so much damage to natural pine forests in California in the past decade that radiata pine has been classified an 'endangered species'. It has also spread to South Africa and Chile.

"We'd be foolish to think it will never get here," says workshop convenor and science and technology broker, Bill Dyck.

"As a country and as a sector, we need to consider how best to deal with PPC, before it gets here, and when it gets here. To do this

best we need to understand as much as we can about PPC.

"We certainly need to have a much better understanding as to how it's spread, and whether we have the vectors that could readily spread PPC throughout our forests. Chances are we do, because even humans have been found to unwittingly spread the disease in Californian radiata pine plantations."

He says while radiata pine has very little natural resistance to PPC, there are some pine species throughout the world that have demonstrated a resistance – at least in the laboratory.

"There is an opportunity to cross these species with radiata pine to produce a PPC-resistant radiata pine. A faster option would be to use

genetic engineering, but currently this isn't an option being seriously pursued in New Zealand given restrictions on the application of GE technology in field situations."

He says the PPC workshop will provide participants with an update on the disease from international



Bill Dyck

experts, identify significant knowledge gaps and research priorities, plan future international research effort in the area, and to consider the establishment of an international research project to focus on research priorities.

The workshop will be held in Rotorua, on 11-12 February 2003.

For more information contact Bill Dyck, email billdyck@xtra.co.nz

Climate change

Forestry should get surplus credits

The Government confirmed its intention to appropriate all carbon credits from forestry to help meet its Kyoto Protocol obligations when it announced the final policy package on climate change in October.



Forest Research

Funds from surplus carbon credits should go to the industry that created them, says NZFOA

What wasn't clear, however, was what would happen to the 50 per cent of carbon credits, worth approximately \$700 million, that would be surplus to these requirements.

"We've accepted that the Government is going to retain carbon credits to meet its obligations," says NZ Forest Owners Association president, Peter Berg.

"The debate, as far as we're concerned, is what happens to the balance. We think it is entirely appropriate that the surplus credits, at least, should be allocated to the source that created them in the first place."

He says the forest industry has the potential to significantly enhance New Zealand's economic growth and regional development, but needs significant investment to do it. Fortunately, the surplus carbon credits provide a

potential source of funds to support that development.

"There are a number of areas where the Government and industry have jointly engaged in facilitating the development of the forest industry in general, such as the Wood Processing Strategy (WPS). Any number of projects under the WPS would be well suited for funding from this source."

Berg says the Government's offer to work with the industry on a Forestry Framework Agreement should help to clarify the issues around surplus credits.

"Officials have been willing to meet, and understand the industry's position fairly well. However, there are still a lot of questions unanswered around this issue.

"We would feel extremely disappointed, for example, if some of the surplus was used to support competitors to the forest industry."

For more information on NZFOA's response to government climate change policies, contact Rob McLagan, tel 04 473 4769.

NZFOA calls for common sense transport strategy

Initial consultation on the Government's transport strategy was held earlier this year with an invited audience – but two of the country's biggest transport users, the forestry and dairy industries, were not on the invitation list.

Despite this, the forest industry raised its concerns about the strategy through a joint NZ Forest Owners Association/NZ Forest Industry Council submission to transport minister Paul Swain in September.

"One of our main concerns is the relegation of efficiency," says NZFOA Transportation Committee chair, Doug Robertson.

"While there is some mention of the need for having affordable systems and a transport system that supports our place in the global market, the opinion of forest industry is that

efficiency is playing second fiddle in the strategy.

"Our stance is that you have to have an efficient base that supports the economy, and then you have social and environment overlays on that base."

Rail vs road

Robertson says another major concern is the future of rail in New Zealand.

"The strategy emphasises the Government's preference for the use of rail, and we don't

disagree with that, provided this is achieved in a sensible way.

"To do this you've got to take all the links in the logistics chain into account. For example, you've got to get the logs to the rail head by truck, and with trucks deviating or back tracking to get there and the logs being transferred from the truck and onto the train, it all expends energy and incurs financial and environmental costs.

"The rail transport leg might be environmentally better on its own, but by the time you take all the other activities into account, you may not have achieved anything – in fact, you may be worse off. Common sense needs to prevail."

He says ownership of rail infrastructure is also an issue.

"In terms of transport for the country, we need to be looking at integration and a choice of modes, and an internationally competitive supply chain.

"We've got a very competitive market for road transport, but a monopoly on rail. We believe the Government is the natural owner of the tracks, in much the same way it owns state highways. This, combined with competitive access to rail by more than one operator, is how we will achieve a level playing field."

The Government's transport strategy is due to be finalised by the end of this year.

For further information contact Doug Robertson, tel 07 350 0863. 



Fletcher Challenge Forests

Rail transport might not be the most efficient option

Driver shortage confirmed

Initial survey results confirm that the trucking industry is facing a significant driver shortage.

The Truck Driver Recruitment and Retention Project, a joint NZ Forest Owners Association, Road Transport Forum and Log Transport Safety Council initiative, heard from the survey team in November.

"The initial report summarised the findings from a survey of drivers, and projected supply and demand. Basically it confirms what we suspected," says NZFOA representative, Doug Robertson.


"Across the whole trucking industry, if nothing is done to fill the gap, we could be looking at a significant shortage of drivers over the next five to 10 years.

"What we want to do is find solutions to fill the shortage so we're not faced with that. At the end of the day, the solutions are going to have to be a mix of industry initiatives and government policy recommendations. The trucking industry cannot implement all the

necessary solutions by itself."

He says one of the possible solutions could be around streamlining the expensive and time-consuming licensing process.

"It can take two to four years to get a class five heavy vehicle licence under the graduated licensing system, assuming the driver can obtain suitable driving experience, and that acts as a real barrier."

The project team will meet again January 2003, and expects to have its report and recommended solutions completed by March 2003. 

22 m rule – use it or lose it

The forest industry remains convinced that longer logging trucks with double-packet trailers are more stable and less likely to roll.

However, logging truck operators can't make the most of the new 22 m rule allowing the longer loads if logs aren't sorted properly after harvesting.

"If we don't make use of the 22 m rule, we won't get the rollover rate down, and Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) could have the exemption removed," says Log Transport Safety Council (LTSC) secretary, Bruce Nairn.

"We need to get the segregation of logs right so when drivers pull up to the skid site, they can load shorter logs onto double-packet trailers.

"That means everyone in the loop, from forest owners, log traders, harvesters, dispatchers, loader operators and truck drivers, need to make changes to their current operations," says Nairn.



Fletcher Challenge Forests

Logs need to be sorted into the right lengths to make the most of the 22 m rule

Transport committee widens scope

The NZFOA Transportation Committee has widened its scope to cover issues facing the entire forest industry – from processed product and residue cartage to log haulage.



Doug Robertson

The committee now has representation from the New Zealand Forest Industry Council (NZFIC), the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association (NZFFA); and Forest Industries Training has also expressed interest in attending meetings.

"This gives the committee a wider role to play, and one of the first things we'll be developing is a transportation policy for the forest industry," says committee chair, Doug Robertson.

The combined committee held its first meeting in October, and will meet 3-4 times a year to discuss both policy/strategy issues and operational/safety issues. It will also run workshops throughout the year, the first of which was held on 6 November.

"We'll cover the big ticket items, for example responding to government policy at a central and regional level, and also the issues like road funding and the future of rail transport," says Robertson.

"On the operational/safety side, we'll be looking at things like the linkage with the Log Transport Safety Council, how we can continue to drive the rollover rate down, and looking at procedures, standards, responding to road rule changes, weights and dimensions – that type of issue."

For further information contact Doug Robertson, tel 07 350 0863. ■

Operational changes

NZFOA and LTSC are developing a set of recommended operational guidelines to distribute to all interested parties. In the interim, operators are asked to note the following:

- Prioritise 8.1 m, 7.4 m and 6.1 m loads for shorts units. 'Minimise' these lengths on 2-packet trailers.
- Maximise 2-packet loads onto 22 m capable units.
- Segregate random stacks roughly into under and over 5 m products to maximise 2-packet loading.
- Have truck and loader drivers query the dispatcher to see if alternative safer loads are available. ■

Report confirms a need for change

The NZ Forest Owners Association (NZFOA) and Log Transport Safety Council (LTSC) successfully petitioned the LTSA to approve an increase in the overall length of logging trucks, from 20 m to 22 m, after research showed the double-packet configuration would make the trucks less likely to roll.

As a result, the industry is required to provide three-monthly reports on the log transport industry's performance in terms of speed, crash rates and public feedback.

The first of these reports, produced by Transport Engineering Research NZ Ltd (TERNZ), shows that of the 12 rollover crashes from 1 July to 30 September 2002, none involved 22 m trucks.

However, analysis shows that up to eight of the 10 single-packet loads that rolled over could have been carried as a double-packet load on a 22 m truck if the logs had been sorted by length.

"This confirms the need for the industry to work together and implement whatever operational changes are required to make better use of the 22 m exemption rule. If we do, the accident rate will come down, and that's good for everyone," says LTSC secretary, Bruce Nairn.

For more information, contact Bruce Nairn, mobile 025 943 695, or email tgmsservices@xtra.co.nz ■

Planning for increased wood harvest

More than 140 participants took part in the joint NZ Forest Owners Association (NZFOA) and NZ Forest Industry Council (NZFIC) forum held in Whangarei in October.

Called *'Looking Forward'*, this year's forum focused on the Wood Processing Strategy (WPS) and issues relating to the further processing of wood fibre in New Zealand – much of which will come from Northland and East Cape regions.

As the two organisations discussed strategies to deal with the huge increase in harvested wood over the next 10 years, transport minister Paul Swain announced details of the new \$30 million regional transport fund, most of which would go towards land transport projects in East Cape and Northland to cope with the large increase in the supply of wood.

Usually Transfund covers around half the costs of a local road project, but under the minister's directive, it will now provide 100 per

cent funding for regional development roads, and alternatives to roading, to six councils in the East Cape and Northland regions.

Mr Swain said the spin-offs, such as increased investment from forestry and transport companies in the regions, would create jobs and boost the local economies.

Speaking at the forum, NZFIC chair Devon McLean said the announcement was great news for the industry, and also for the regions concerned.

"This funding will provide much needed improvements in roading standards to cater for the huge increase in wood harvested, and will go a long way to facilitate the development of the forest industry in those regions".



Fletcher Challenge Forests

New Zealand's wood harvest is expected to increase from 20 million cubic metres a year to nearly 40 million cubic metres by 2015.

Resource management

WPS seeks improvements to RMA processes

Work continues on initiatives developed under the Wood Processing Strategy to improve the Resource Management Act (RMA) consent processes.

Code of Practice

The new Code of Practice (COP) to improve RMA compliance processes is expected to be implemented early next year.

The COP includes descriptions of wood processing activities and their potential environmental effects, best practice and mitigation options, appropriate standards and guidelines and advice on RMA processes.

A final draft of the COP is expected to be completed by the end of the year, so it can be approved by NZ Forest Industries Council and the reference group ready for implementation early in 2003.

Co-chair of the Wood Processing Strategy RMA working group, Peter Sligh, says finalising the COP is subject to ensuring an

appropriate level of support from both councils and industry.

"The test in this respect will be whether the product provides sufficient robust information so that it will gain acceptance and widespread use by councils and the industry."

He says additional funding was recently secured from the Sustainable Farming Fund (MAF) to help cover the cost of implementation, and also provide for 'health checks' regarding uptake at the end of 2003 and 2004.

Council best practice

A series of workshops to develop best practice by councils for RMA planning and consenting were held in October in the five main harvest areas: Northland; East Coast/

Hawkes Bay; Central North Island; Southern North Island/Marlborough/Nelson; and Otago/Southland.

Organised and funded by the Ministry for the Environment, the workshops were attended by key council people and industry representatives.

"In general there was a good degree of alignment between council and industry people regarding their issues and concerns," says Sligh. "As a result of the discussions, MfE is preparing an extensive list of actions to improve practice."

The list includes ensuring council support for the use of the code of practice (COP) in consent and planning processes, consideration of methods and the desirability of providing for the COP within plans, sharing RMA best practice among councils and industry, and industry enhancing its public image.

For further information, contact Peter Sligh, tel 07 574 6701.

New forest contractors association

More than 50 contractors with a combined business turnover of \$50 million had signed up to the new Forest Industry Contractors Association (FICA) within weeks of its launch.

The new association held a series of events throughout the country in November to enlist the support of silviculture and harvesting contractors. FICA director, John Stulen, says he's encouraged by the response.

"The number one role of the new national association will be to advocate on behalf of forest contractors, so we're really pleased with

the support they've shown," says Stulen.

"Advocating on issues around health and safety will be a major focus, particularly in light of recent ACC levy increases.

"We'll also focus on technology transfer and research and development through independently managed industry cooperative projects," he says.

"Our aim is to provide information to help contractors improve their operations efficiency and increase profitability, as well as deliver a better service to their clients".

Stulen says FICA will also address the growing need for contractor registration and certification schemes.

NZ Forest Owners Association chief executive, Rob McLagan, says the NZFOA fully supports the establishment of FICA.

For more information visit FICA's website, www.fica.org.nz, or contact John Stulen, tel 07 921 1382. ■

Fire research

Fire research priorities benefit forestry

As the largest individual contributor to the Forest and Rural Fire Research Programme (FRFRP), the NZ Forest Owners Association (NZFOA) has been given more say on the programme's research priorities.

Until recently, the FRFRP based its research and technology transfer priorities on a voting system that gave all contributors an equal say – regardless of the level of funding they contributed.

However, due to feedback from the research programme's Advisory Committee, the system has now been changed.

"For the first time, our prioritisation exercise was based around the level of funding provided by each sector," says Forest Research fire scientist, Grant Pearce.

"As a result, the present exercise better reflects the priorities of those contributors, such as the NZFOA, that contribute more to the programme."

NZFOA contributes \$45,000 a year.

Pearce says a number of the research activities identified as high priority will be of greatest benefit to forestry – such as fuel load and fire behaviour modelling in plantation fuel types.

"Previously, these activities had been pushed down the list due to the combined voting

power of the likes of DOC, Defence and Federated Farmers, who would give priority to things like fire ecology issues."

He says the research priorities identified fit well with the activities currently being worked on, including fire climate research (production of fire danger climatologies and prediction of fire season severity) and fire behaviour modelling in specific fuel types (experimental burning, grass curing).

On the technology transfer side, importance was placed on continuing the transfer of research results via the research programme's Fire Technology Transfer Note, Fire Research Update newsletters, Fire Bulletin series, Fire Research website, national conference presentations, and through industry group meetings, such as the NZFOA Fire Committee.

The activities identified as high priority are being costed, and the proposed list of activities and associated targets to be achieved in the next and subsequent years will be presented to the Advisory Committee for approval. ■



Forest Research

Experimental burning to determine fire behaviour was given a high priority

Technology transfer

The Forest and Rural Fire Research Programme (FRFRP) has developed a dedicated section in the recently updated Forest Research website, and is keen to have feedback from forest owners.

"We want the site to be both useful and interesting to everyone associated with rural fire, and we're keen to hear feedback on what's currently up there," says Forest Research fire scientist, Grant Pearce.

To see the 'first cut' of the site, visit www.forestresearch.co.nz/fire. Comments can be sent to Grant Pearce, grant.pearce@forestresearch.co.nz ■

New NZFOA council

A new National Executive Council of the NZFOA was appointed in October 2002. They are:

- Peter Berg, NZFOA President
- Rob McLagan, NZFOA Chief Executive
- Dave Hilliard, Chairman, NZFOA Education, Training & Safety Committee; Chairman, Joint NZFIC/NZFOA Safety Committee
- Lees Seymour, Chairman, Communications, Promotion & Membership Committee
- Peter Clark, Chairman, Research, Science & Technology Committee
- Jeremy Fleming, Chairman, Forest Health Committee
- Sheldon Drummond
- Brian Pritchard, Chairman, NZFOA Resource & Environment Committee; Co-chairman, Joint NZFIC/NZFOA Environment and Energy Committee
- Doug Robertson, Chairman, NZFOA Transportation Committee; Chairman, NZFIC/NZFOA Transportation and Logistics Committee
- Charlie Schell
- Kerry Ellem, Chairman, Fire Committee
- Philip Langston, Chairman, Forestry Business Committee
- Graeme Hall, Secretary

Contact details and information on council members will be available on the NZFOA website, www.nzfoa.nzforestry.co.nz ■

Plants threaten forest

The world's largest beech stand, in the Shirakami Mountains, Japan, is under threat from Asian psyllium and white clover.

Japanese forestry officials are monitoring the growth of the plants, which they fear could disturb the ecosystem by affecting smaller plants in the area. Officials believe the psyllium and clover seeds were brought in on the shoes and socks of hikers. ■

Facts & figures

Did you know... there are more than half a million hectares of plantation forests in the



Central North Island alone? Or that more than 13 million m³ of logs are processed in New Zealand every year?

Find out more in the latest *New Zealand Forest Industry Facts & Figures 2002/2003*.

Facts & Figures is produced by NZFOA, NZFIC and MAF, and is available online at:

www.nzfoa.nzforestry.co.nz/facts_figures.asp
Alternatively, hard copies are available for \$5.00/copy for 1-9 copies or \$3.00/copy for 10 or more (inc GST and postage). Contact NZFOA, PO Box 1208, Wellington. ■

Deadline for 0800 plates

As from 1 January 2003, all members of NZFOA will be asked to use only logging trucks displaying the 0800 sign.

NZFOA chief executive, Rob McLagan, says adopting the policy is fair to the operators already using the scheme, and it will affirm that the industry is taking log truck and trailer safety seriously.

The 0800 scheme was set up by LTSC and NZFOA so the public could report both good and bad driving, and McLagan says it is working well.

"There's been a significant increase in the number of calls from the public, with about two negative calls to one positive. Since people are more inclined to complain than to praise, that's probably a good result."

However, he says there are still a number of truck operators yet to display the plates, which is why the new policy is being adopted.

Both the NZFOA and LTSC have also agreed to approach non-members – including log traders and farm foresters – and request that they too only use carriers displaying 0800 plates. ■

RMA amendments

The RMA Amendment Bill currently before Parliament provides for limited notification of consent applications.

The forest industry sees this as a good thing.

"It's good in that it will allow a smoother pathway for many applications, while at the same time not unduly limiting the opportunity for genuine involvement by people who may be affected by the activity," says co-chair of the Wood Processing Strategy RMA working group, Peter Sligh.

"However, there remain other fundamental problems that have not been adequately addressed, including limiting the ability for the process to be frustrated by individuals who do not have a substantive case." ■

Oz still important

Australia has been the largest and most important market for New Zealand sawn timber since the 1970s, NZFOA chief executive Rob McLagan told the Future Forests 2002 conference in Melbourne last month (November).

He said Australia will continue to be an important market, even as it becomes more self-sufficient in lumber production.

Shipping from New Zealand tends to cost less than Australian internal transportation, so New Zealand is cost competitive vis-a-vis Australian producers, he said.

However, with new entrants like Chile, South Africa and Finland, New Zealand's dominant position is not assured. ■

Biosecurity strategy out

The second draft Biosecurity Strategy is to be released for public comment this month (December 2002), and will be open for submissions until February 2003.

A copy of the strategy will be available on the Biosecurity Strategy website, www.biostrategy.govt.nz.

For further information, contact Stephen Olsen at MAF, tel 04 470 2753, or email stephen.olsen@maf.govt.nz ■

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