

protection of soil from rain-induced erosion is even more important. The use of trees to stabilise river banks and erodible slopes is common on farmland but much remains to be done by both individual farmers and local councils. Sophisticated management techniques are available to optimise the multiple benefits often possible with such stands. These benefits include control of soil erosion, enhancement of water quality, improved amenity and landscape, timber for a variety of end uses, edible crops, and stock fodder.

Forestry in New Zealand is therefore in a state of fundamental change which offers exciting opportunities for the future. Traditional pine forestry has its challenges in the processing and marketing of what it has already got. The

greater challenge of the early 1990s is to broaden our concept of forestry – which even our Minister of Forests admits is narrow by international standards (The Press 29/6/89) – to integrate it more effectively with other land uses and to see it as an appropriate tool in community development.

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INDIGENOUS PRODUCTION FORESTRY

In my concern over the future of silver beech management in Western Southland, I have come to realise that indigenous production forestry in general is in urgent need of legislation to protect it from uncontrolled exploitation and to ensure its sustainability in the future.

When the Forest Service was in existence it operated under the Forests Act of 1949. Within this legislative framework it had responsibility for a sizeable proportion of the total indigenous forest estate in New Zealand, and developed a sound (and widely accepted) indigenous forest policy to control the management of this resource. The policy provided guidelines for production, protection and recreation management. Although not excluding the possibility of conversion of indigenous forest to another land use, the emphasis of the policy lies strongly towards the philosophy of sustained yield management of indigenous forest as a renewable resource in its own right. This policy, then, was the quasi-legal basis for ensuring that State forest was managed according to sound management principles. Of course, this policy applied to State forests only, the Forest Service having no authority over the management of indigenous forest under other ownership.

Upon the government restructuring of the Forest Service, a large part of the indigenous State forest estate was allocated to the Department of Conservation. That organisation operates under the Conservation Act 1987 which does not permit the harvesting of wood for commercial gain. The remainder of the indigenous State forest estate was allo-

cated to the Forestry Corporation whose legislation framework imposes no controls on the management of indigenous forest. Nevertheless, the Forestry Corporation and the Department of Conservation have developed (or are in the process of developing) covenants over the indigenous forest allocated to the Corporation. These covenants include certain basic requirements such as the regeneration of logged forest by indigenous timber species, and yield control. These covenants will be transferable to any future owner of the land.

The only controls over the exploitation of indigenous forest in private ownership are exercised by the legislation provided by Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act and the Town and Country Planning Act, neither of which provides for regeneration or yield control. The Forestry Corporation is also required to act within these laws, of course. With the decrease in logging activity in ex Forest Service indigenous State forest, undue pressure is being applied to the exploitation of private indigenous forest, with only the minimum of control. In the example of silver beech in Western Southland, we see some control over the Forestry Corporation's 12,000 hectares of beech forest by way of the covenants, but virtually no control over the exploitation of some 12,000 hectares of Maori land in the Te Wae Wae Maori lands, or over any of the private freehold lands containing silver beech. Thus we have the anomaly of one part of the industry (the Forestry Corporation, whose assets are about to be privatised) under covenant,

but the rest of the industry free to do what it likes with its indigenous resources. I assume that the same thing has happened in other parts of the country.

If we want to get the best utilisation and maximum sustainable yield from our indigenous resources, they must be pooled, regardless of ownership, to provide the wood-using industry with sustainable supplies. Sustainability will provide stability which, in turn, will mean higher stumpages with all the advantages in terms of better utilisation of a limited resource which flows from that.

I believe that this whole area needs to be reviewed to ensure that New Zealand has a viable and sustainable industry based on the managed utilisation of sustainable indigenous forest resources. One way to do this is to recognise discrete areas of indigenous forest for management as sustained yield units, with their own management plan, and covering all of the utilisable resource in the area. The key could be the provision of adequate legislation. I understand that a number of European/Scandinavian countries have legislation controlling the utilisation of forests and ensuring their sustainability.

The logical agency to oversee the drafting of this legislation and its implementation is the Ministry of Forestry. I understand that an initiative on a national policy for native forests has now been taken by the Minister of Forests. It is important that the Institute of Forestry gets fully involved to ensure that its voice is heard in this fundamental matter of forest management.

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