

RECENT EVENTS

New Minister of Forestry

Jim (not to be confused with our esteemed President Wink) Sutton is the new Minister of Forestry. He was elected to Cabinet on January 25 and also holds the Agriculture portfolio.

One of his first comments to the press was to confirm the "logic" of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries absorbing the Ministry of Forestry, creating in effect a Ministry of Primary Industries. Although he stressed there was no firm proposal at this stage, such a prospect was almost "inevitable".

This idea is in conflict with the industry's views. Forest Owners Association President Bryce Heard said that while the industry looked forward to working with Mr Sutton it was worried about MOF and MAF becoming MAFF. "The forestry sector stands to be earning 30% of the nation's gross export revenues over the next 15-20 years and because it is going through an expansion phase the sector demands a single Ministry's attention," he said.

The new Minister of Forestry was born in Reading, England and educated at Timaru Boys' High School. He entered Parliament as member for Waitaki in 1984 and was also the Waitaki candidate for Labour in 1981. He has held various offices in Federated Farmers of New Zealand.

He relinquishes his chairmanship of the Finance and Expenditure Parliamentary Select Committee on joining Cabinet.

Mr Sutton was the convener of the Government caucus committee on economics/customs/tax/fiscal matters until November 1989, and is a member of the Primary Production, Marketing and Tourism Caucus Committee.

His specialist interests in Parliament have been economic management and tax reform issues, agriculture, and rural provincial issues, and at home he has not been a complete stranger to forestry-related matters either. He practises a bit of agroforestry on his farm and his daughter, Ann, graduated B.For. Sc. from Canterbury School of Forestry in 1986.

A considerable variety of shelter-belt species can be found at various stages of growth on his Waihaorunga property, which provides a rather harsh environment with its clay soils and unreliable rainfall. Even now, Jim Sutton likes nothing better than getting out into one



Mr Jim Sutton

of the small woodlots on his farm with a pruning saw to recharge his batteries.

As a backbench MP he made a private submission to the Consultative Committee on Primary Sector Taxation, advocating a cash-based taxation regime for forestry.

H. Levack

New Director-General of Conservation

Bill Mansfield joined the Department of Conservation as its new Director-General on February 2, 1990. He comes from the Department of Justice where he was Group Manager for Policy Analysis and Development. He started work there in 1986 as Deputy Secretary.

Before joining the Justice Department, Mr Mansfield worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he held a number of positions, including Head of the Legal Division and Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

Chief State Services Commissioner Don Hunn said Mr Mansfield had a background in legal and policy development matters which included the negotiation of international conservation and environmental issues. It was expected that this experience would be valuable at this stage of the Department of Conservation's development.

UK Paper acquisition opens European markets for Fletcher Challenge

Fletcher Challenge has made a successful entry into Europe as a result of the \$807 million purchase of Britain's leading fine paper producing company, UK Paper Plc.

UK Paper is the largest manufacturer of high-quality printing paper in the United Kingdom and its products include one- and two-sided coated woodfree papers, uncoated woodfree papers and speciality packaging papers.

These are produced on sophisticated, computer-controlled machines at the company's mills in Donside, Sittingbourne and Kemsley. UK Paper also has its own paper merchandising subsidiary, William Guppy & Son, based at Harold Hill in Essex, which operates a network of eight branches.

Fletcher Challenge decided in 1988 to establish a European presence in forest products following its success in Australasia, North and South America. The move was also made in preparation for the 1992 common market in Europe. European finances, currencies and economies are often counter cyclical to North America, so the move may be seen as overall strategy by Fletcher's Forest Industries Group.

While the Group has global business and paper sector skills, it has sought a company with specific printing and writing paper skills, local market knowledge and expertise to spearhead its planned expansion into Europe.

The acquisition also adds a major new product group - woodfree quality papers - to the Group's range of paper products.

Forestry Promotion in Chile

The forestry promotion legislation was introduced in October 1974. In the last 15 years, Chile has, as a result:

- Classified 3 million ha as preferentially suited to forestry
- placed or is currently placing 5 million ha under management plans of various kinds
- planted 600,000 ha
- pruned 200,000 ha.

To encourage this, the State has invested \$US83 million through subsidies. Chile now has 1.3 million ha of plantations.

Source: Chilean Forestry News, December 1989.