

*President's comments***Impressive students studying forestry**

This year's bunch of applicants for our three student awards was impressive. From judging these awards it's clear that forestry is attracting top students, not just academically but in sporting and cultural achievement as well. What's also of note is the number of mature students who are returning from the forest or skid site for tertiary education. I'm optimistic that these people will ensure a bright future for our sector.

As our June conference clashes with the student's exams we are planning to hold an event to celebrate these awards at FORSOC (School of Forestry) and invite Lincoln along. Polly Taylor, a 3rd year forestry student, who is on the NZIF council helped to promote these awards and membership of the Institute. It's very pleasing to see a much closer liaison with students and with their voice on council it means we're able to better meet their requirements and interests. We now have 24 student affiliates who receive the weekly newsletter (but not the journal) and were eligible for these awards.

Undergraduate Scholarship - Eddie Warren

Eddie is a 3rd year forestry student at the Canterbury University School of Forestry whose special interest is in silviculture and genetic improvement. Eddie is considering further study and plans to work either in research or in a managerial role.

Frank Hutchinson Scholarship - Bhubaneswor Dhakal

Bhubaneswor is currently undertaking a PhD in forest economics at Lincoln University. Farm forestry and social forest policy are of great interest to this Nepalese forester.

Mary Sutherland Scholarship - Ronnie van Mierlo

Ronnie has a keen interest in establishment and silviculture having spent nearly a decade working in forestry around the Central North Island. Since studying at Waiariki Institute of Technology he's become interested in harvesting and ultimately would like to become a Registered Forestry Consultant. In addition he intends to assist his iwi to protect and enhance their indigenous biodiversity.

NZ Forester of the Year nominations close 30 May 2005

We want to see nominations from all parts of the sector including those unsung heroes who are often "out the back" making sure that the "show stays on the road". The Institute's highest award is open to any nominated NZIF member who has achieved at least full member status. The criteria are intentionally open to encourage as many applications as possible. Consideration will be given to the nominee's contribution to New Zealand's economic, social and environmental development, the use of innovation and new technologies or the creation of a new product or business of significance to forestry.

Applicants must be nominated and the nominator can download the forms from <http://www.nzif.co.nz/awards.htm>.

Permanent forest sinks and integrated land management

During April 2005 MAF invited interested stakeholders to discuss the Permanent Forest Sinks Initiative, which will see the government devolving carbon credits in return for a permanent forest. This followed on from an earlier meeting in late 2003 where industry recommended that harvesting of the continuous canopy forests would be part of the scheme. This recommendation was accepted and it is proposed that harvesting can occur 35 years from the date of establishment. In this second round of consultation stakeholders questioned the harvesting limitations and asked for provisions that would simplify forest management, risk management and carbon monitoring.

Overall we asked for robust policy. This reminded me of a Cabinet office training session for government officials I attended when working for the Ministry for the Environment. The head of the government's drafting office made two key points - he played his daughters pop song "tell me what you want, what you really, really want" and told us that he could not make a "silk purse" regulation/legislation out of a policy "sows ear".

Essentially this initiative has wandered into the zone between New Zealand's plantation forestry clearfelling regime and the sustainable forest management practised in our privately owned indigenous forest. The harvesting provisions move the scheme away from a conservation land use regime (preservationism) slightly towards economic production (resourcism), where our exotic forestry sector firmly sits.

At the recent Environment Institute of Australia and New Zealand conference, David Norton of the School of Forestry gave a fascinating keynote speech on integrated land management focussing on the high country tenure review. He pointed out that if we are to move towards sustainability we need to find the middle ground between our current approaches of either "lock it all up" or "use it all and significantly modify the ecosystem". I recommend you read his paper "Approaches to Sustainable Land Management in New Zealand". Some of these issues were discussed by David in the November 2004 Journal (pp 39-41).

Consultation and MAF - the need for a Forestry Forum

Our Southern North Island section asked Murray Sherwin, Director General of Agriculture and Forestry, to talk on the "F" in MAF. He gave numerous examples where there is direct or indirect action linked to forestry within MAF (see our 22 April 2005 newsletter). It was clear from the questions from the floor that this was not common knowledge and better communication is required.

As interested stakeholders the Institute will be working with MAF to set up a regular Forestry Forum three times a year where we hear what's going within MAF and MAF hears what's happening in the sector. The forum will also give us the opportunity to have an input into policy areas.

Jaquetta (Ket) Bradshaw