

NZIF AGM and conference

30 August – 1 September 2016

Chris Goulding

The New Zealand Institute of Forestry held its 88th AGM and annual conference in Dunedin.

AGM

The annual report and the budget 2016–2017 were presented and approved.

The motion to change the NZIF rules by adding provisions relating to exemptions under the Real Estate Agents Act 2008 was passed by the required two-thirds majority. These rule changes only apply to registered members, and were proposed in the expectation that an exemption to the Act for registered members will be obtained. Under the Act, only licenced real estate agents and those exempt from the provisions of the Act are permitted to carry out real estate agency work, defined as work done or services provided, in trade, on behalf of another person for the purposes of bringing about a transaction. The implication of the exemption is that NZIF registered members who provide services such as forest valuations during a forest sale process will not be required to become licenced real estate agents.

A motion to amend Section 1.6 of the NZIF Code of Ethics by adding at the end the sentence, 'Prior to making public statements on the environment, policy

and forest practices, a member will indicate on whose behalf the statements are made', failed to obtain the necessary majority and was therefore not passed.

New Fellows

Three new Fellows were appointed at the AGM – **Ian Page, Ian Moore and Geoff Thorp.**

Thomas Kirk award – John Groome

The Thomas Kirk award, made biennially, was awarded to John Groome for eminence and recognises his outstanding contributions in the field of forestry over his long career. He was one of the first pupils at Kaingaroa School when it opened in 1931 and later studied at the Australian Forestry School in 1949–50. He created J.G. Groome and Associates in 1962, when forestry consulting in New Zealand was in its infancy. He joined the Institute of Forestry in 1948 and started the Hawke's Bay Local Section in 1956. He was a Councillor, Vice-President and then President in 1972–73. NZIF President James Treadwell stated that, 'John's optimism has been an outstanding characteristic all his life. He has been responsible for setting the standard of the professional forester within New Zealand and the sector owes a debt of gratitude to John.'



Tony Groome receives the Thomas Kirk award on behalf of his father



Sally Strang, NZIF Forester of the Year

NZIF Forester of the Year – Sally Strang

Sally is the Environmental Manager, Hancock Forest Management (NZ) Ltd, an engineer, farmer, and protector of the environment and the forestry sector. James Treadwell stated that 'the award was for her tireless work in finding ways to reverse erosion in high priority areas ... and she has spent almost a decade debating the merits of one environmental standard.'

NZIF Foundation student and travel awards

Student awards

- The *NZ University Undergraduate Scholarship* was awarded to **Ben Reriti**, a Bachelor of Forestry Science student at the University of Canterbury
- The *Frank Hutchinson Scholarship* for a post-graduate student was awarded to **Tingdong Guo**, a PhD student at the University of Canterbury who is researching the effects of re-development on urban forests in Christchurch.

Student poster competition

The winners for the best student posters submitted to the NZIF conference (as judged by conference delegates) were:

- **Alfred Duval**, a fourth year student at the School of Forestry, received first prize of \$800 for his poster on what affects load rates at different ports

- **Grace Jones**, a fourth year student at the School of Forestry, won second prize of \$500 for her poster on factors that influence stiffness in 10-year-old radiata pine
- **James Govina**, a post-graduate student at the Canterbury University School of Forestry, won third prize of \$200 for his poster on resin and resin canals in clones and families of *P. radiata*.

Chavasse Travel Award

The award of \$3,500 was made to **Paul Silcock**, Waikato manager for the forest management and consulting company NZ Forestry. He will attend the 2016 Redwood Symposium in California to present the first year's results from a research project the Sequoia Action Group is undertaking with Scion with funding from the Sustainable Forestry Fund.

The *Mary Sutherland*, *Jon Dey Memorial* and *Otago/Southland* awards were not granted this year.



Paul Silcock



Tingdong Guo receives the Frank Hutchinson Scholarship award from Dr Andrew McEwen

The Prince of Wales Awards

Two new forestry awards for New Zealand and Australia were announced at the conference in Dunedin, with the objective of creating a global network of young forestry professionals who are inspired to lead together on the vital matter of sustainable forest management. The Prince of Wales has long been a strong supporter of sustainable forest management as part of his interest in natural production systems and the awards reflect his vision for forests and woodlands to sustainably deliver the vital social, environmental and economic benefits.

The *Prince of Wales Award for Sustainable Forestry* recognises the achievements of an outstanding young forestry professional with a passion for sustainable forest management and a commitment to their national forestry institute. Two Sustainable Forestry awards will be presented annually, to one recipient from Australia and one from New Zealand. The *Prince of Wales Forest Leadership Award* is an exchange programme for forestry students, providing an opportunity to work abroad and develop a wider view of sustainable forestry.

Conference theme – Forestry: exploring the changing regulatory and market environments

The conference was well attended and very successful. The first day was a workshop with in-depth presentations and more time for debate. On the second day, the first paper by Grant Dobson introduced the forest sector in the region; 205,000 ha of plantations, 50% of the wood production processed domestically, and with a species mix with a large component of non-radiata, chiefly Douglas-fir and eucalypts.

Two papers provided a contrast to the policy of land-use change. That by Mike Barton described the efforts of the Lake Taupo Protection Trust, with a target of removing the 20% of nitrogen leached into the lake, where 93% of the manageable nitrogen entering the lake was from agriculture. Since 2004, farm costs have increased by 48%, with a 30% reduction in EBIT/ha. Edwin Jensen, manager of Ngai Tahu Forest Estates Ltd, described the conversion to dairy of Eyrewell Forest resulting in 6,000 ha of irrigated land supporting 14,000 cows. The Ngai Tahu perspective is to align cultural, commercial and environmental investment with their values in promoting sustainability. He presented a vigorous viewpoint on the need for a rational debate on the ETS that encouraged forest sector investment while reducing regulatory risk, but the time was not yet to include agriculture.

A short but entertaining session introduced Stuart Nash of Labour and Winston Peters of NZ First. The former discussed the needs of the forest sector, policy and the re-establishment of a variant of the former Forest Service, while the latter demonstrated his 'mastery of Parliament's unique environment', clearly relishing the opportunities to hold the balance of power at the next election.

Blair Morris returned to the reality of New Zealand's supply chain, emphasising how small this country is in the world's shipping, and the threats (becoming a 'domestic' feeder to Australia's ports) and opportunities (land transport/freight hubs integrated with the new, large 9,500 TEU container ships). Matt Wakelin described some of the new technologies being introduced at our log export ports.

David Janett discussed whether in the current environment pruning added value, with the pruned log price differential halving over the last 20 years, although recovering recently, and illustrating the difficulty in forecasting markets – 'who knows?'. Shaun Cawood described CraigPine's processing timber clearwood, perhaps not emphasising enough how good a company like CraigPine must be in sales and marketing support, as well as in product quality in order to service the 'Big Box' retail stores in the United States. Paul Nicholls' presentation on the international market for New Zealand logs presented graphs of the increase in harvest in the last six years, nearly all of the rise being exported in log form, principally to China. In contrast, Russia's log exports in the same period have declined slightly, while their sawn timber exports have increased by 80%. Stephen Canny's theme was that waste wood is the fuel of the future, with illustrations of bioenergy hubs in Otago and Southland. Conversion of coal-fired boilers to wood-fired offered most potential with small to medium sizes, reducing costs and carbon emissions (dramatically) over coal.

The final session was on alternative products – freshwater crayfish aquaculture in forest ponds (John Hollows), hardwood plantations (Graeme Manley), bees and mānuka (Angus McPherson) and essential, aromatic oil from Douglas-fir foliage (unfortunately not from radiata – Paul Greaves). This session showed that a willingness not to conform with standard ideas could produce innovative and profitable forest products far different from radiata pine logs.

