

Ready for new forestry opportunities

New Zealand's foremost forestry consultancy company, Groome Poyry, has strengthened its expertise and announced management changes. These coincide with a drive to position the company for new business opportunities in Spain and Chile, countries which also have major radiata pine plantations.

From January 1, 1992, John Groome will become the Executive Chairman of the company; and the former executive director of NZFP Forests Limited, Colin McKenzie, who joined Groome Poyry in August, will take up a new position as President of the company.

"Colin McKenzie has exceptional experience as former manager of New Zealand's largest private radiata pine estate, and he adds an extra dimension to our 30 years of consultancy services both in New Zealand and internationally," said Mr Groome.

Membership of the board of directors remains unchanged. It includes Messrs John Groome; Jouko Virta, chief executive of the Jaakko Poyry consulting division based in London; John Barassi, managing director of Jaakko Poyry Australia Pty Limited; and Len Wilson who is currently on assignment in Fiji undertaking the reconstruction of Fiji Industries Limited. In the role of chief executive of that company Mr Wilson continues a 25 year association for the consultancy with their first overseas client.

Joint Venture Company

Groome Poyry is a joint venture company with the Finnish group, Jaakko Poyry, the largest forestry consulting company in the world. It has offices in Auckland and Christchurch, and is currently providing studies and management expertise to nine overseas countries including Indonesia, Australia, Malaysia, Solomon Islands and Fiji. The consultancy has developed significant experience in the establishment of fast-growing hardwood plantations on degraded soils in tropical countries, so reducing the liquidation of remaining rain forests. This expertise complements the experience with the traditional New Zealand softwood background.

"We now want to increase our drive to transfer New Zealand's world-renowned reputation in the management of radiata pine plantations to new opportunities in both Spain and Chile," said Mr Groome. "Our consultants have been working for three years on site selection, the improvement of nurseries and fire protection for the industry in Galicia, Spain,

and we will be increasing our attention to identify further opportunities there."

New Chile Opportunities

Groome Poyry, with the wide South American experience and knowledge of the Jaakko Poyry Group, would be actively involved in Chile and Argentina, both of which have extensive softwood plantations.

"The close links we have with the world's largest forestry consulting group, and our involvement in many market studies, convinces me that New Zealand is in a position to sell all the forest products it can grow in almost any form it chooses to develop," he said.

"Already, the present Minister of Forests is very active in promoting joint venture forestry on farmland, an activity

our company has been involved with for over two decades, and I hope he will also take a lead in promoting more on-shore processing to counter the frightening increase in log exports."

He said the new Laminated Veneer Lumber plant being built in Carterton by Juken Nissho was a excellent example of how New Zealand can add value to low quality logs with relatively low capital plants.

"I believe Groome Poyry is also making a significant contribution to the value-added exercise by successfully exporting one of our premium forest products - management skills and expertise. The changes announced in the structure of our company will enable us to take advantage of even more opportunities in the international marketplace," said Mr Groome.

Greenpeace NZ gives qualified support to Forest Accord

Greenpeace NZ gave qualified support to the NZ Forest Accord unveiled on August 14, 1991. (See editorial comment.)

"The Royal Forest & Bird Society and NZ Forest Owners' Association are to be commended for surmounting past differences in order to produce an accord covering areas of common environmental concern," said Forests Campaigner Jacqui Barrington. "We support this Accord because it has the potential to play a positive role in protecting both New Zealand forests and those in the tropics, but only if the vision which created our current plantation resource is further developed on a sound ecological basis."

The parties to the Accord "recognise that commercial plantation forests . . . offer an alternative to the depletion of natural forests" and "acknowledge the mutual benefits emanating from an accord between New Zealand commercial forestry enterprises and conservation groups and the example that this unique accord can provide for the international community."

Greenpeace support for the Accord is tempered by its reservations towards large monoculture plantations of *Pinus radiata* which it maintains are neither environmentally desirable nor sustainable.

"Especially in developing countries people need more from plantation forests than just fibre and energy. They need game, nuts, fruits, medicinal plants and the ability of the forest vegetation to double as fodder for livestock. Pine or eucalypt plantations fulfil none of these

criteria, acidify and degrade the soil and need vast quantities of water for their growth. This is why tribal peoples often resort to destroying such plantations on their traditional lands. New Zealand must beware of compounding already severe environmental problems in the Third World by promoting an unsuitable model for forestry development," said Jacqui Barrington.

Greenpeace hopes that the expertise and the vision of New Zealand foresters will now develop a different model of diverse plantation forestry, one which promotes multi-purpose and hardwood species which do not need toxic chemical treatment and which offer added benefits in the form of edible crops, stock fodder, nectar to support bird and bee populations, the ability to fix nitrogen in the soil and to prevent or stabilise soil erosion.

Greenpeace says the necessary research has already been carried out and species such as the various *Cupressus* (*macrocarpa*, *lawsonia*), Tasmanian Blackwood, Sweet Chestnut, Black Walnut, Pecan, Tree Lucerne, Thorny Acacia and numerous others have been identified.

"The NZ Forest Accord is a positive first step between environmental and commercial interests towards taking the pressure off threatened natural forests," said Ms Barrington. "Let the Accord now be the foundation for a new, sustainable, ecologically sound form of plantation forestry which will have the support of environmentalists and the poor in developing countries as well."