

Message from the Chief Executive

When the winners at last week Farm Forestry Association Awards were presented with a chainsaw, I know that I am in an industry that means business. The chainsaw image draws many portrayals, such as 'cutting the red tape', 'getting down to action' and 'making an impact' – all things that lead to a result.

As an industry we don't (well not in Wellington) have a chainsaw to call our shots, hence the need to collaborate and work together across Associations to generate growth and benefits to our members. This action is happening, with the recent joint board meeting between WPMA and the NZFOA, plus signing of the peak forest and wood products sector agreement testimony to the willingness to work as one for the greater forest industry good.

Chainsaw or not, we are heading on the right path as to cutting down the undergrowth to ensure positive outcomes for our wood products and forest industry. My congratulations to all the FFA winners – and enjoy those chainsaws.



Mark

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Fast Track Approvals Bill must consider reinvestment in existing infrastructure

Facilitation of projects with "significant" benefits is a core purpose of the Fast Track Approvals Bill. As worded, the purpose of the Bill suggests a focus on new and additional projects whereas the national interest can and is supported at times by reinvestment in existing infrastructure such as encouraging growth for established companies within the wood processing and manufacturing industry. WPMA is requesting a broader interpretation of the application of the Bill, that facilitates both investment and reinvestment in infrastructure and development that provides significant economic and social national benefits. Our submission is in full support of the Bills purpose based on the understanding that the benefits include improved natural and economic resilience, increased regional and high-value employment, and more effective adoption of the economic and social changes expected of New Zealand as a global citizen and an exporter of high-value goods.

Importation of overseas building products – more detail needed

Greater clarity on the Government's announcement last week to ease restrictions on building materials from overseas as a means of a 'shake up to lower prices' in the building and construction industry is being sought by the WPMA. It is uncertain at this stage what the Bill will include or how it will be developed - this dialogue will take place over coming months. A meeting has been requested with Hon Chris Penk (Minister for Building and Construction) to discuss in greater detail, plus to provide him with an overview of our industry and the importance of supporting increased use of timber in construction within New Zealand.



Helen Clark Foundation Food and Fibre report misguided

New Zealand Forest Owner's Association has called out the Clark foundation on the recently released NZIER report commissioned by the Helen Clark Foundation on New Zealand's food and fibre exports. NZFOA Chief Executive, Dr Elizabeth Heeg, says that it fails to appreciate the economic, social and environmental benefits of production forestry. The *Pathways to Prosperity report* clings to forestry misconceptions, claiming the sector is a pine 'monoculture', producing woody material and sediment in waterways and having a negative impact on rural communities. Heeg, says there is evidence to the contrary. "Forestry shows the greatest growth potential of all primary industries with an increasingly important role in strengthening our rural communities and economy". WPMA supports the concern of the NZFOA noting the lack of appreciation for the scope of worldwide demand for timber and timber products in the future is perhaps the largest failure of the Clark Foundation report.

Climate Change Commission draft advice signals the benefit of pine trees

Draft advice from the Climate Change Commission reviews New Zealand's 2050 net-zero carbon emissions target and makes recommendations to the government. In almost every sector, progress on reducing emissions is more advanced or looking more plausible than when the Climate Change Commission last advised on targets in 2021. One of the three big drivers is a spike in pine tree planting which has brought forward emissions removals not expected until later decades. WPMA will be raising the need to also include the benefits that Long-Lived Harvested Wood Products have in absorbing biogenic carbon included within the draft advice to the Minister. Our submission will focus on this and the wider benefits that timber and wood products provide to achieving our net-zero carbon target. The [consultation period ends](#) on Friday, 31 May.



Legal Harvest Assurance System – opportunity to provide feedback

The Ministry for Primary Industries is seeking feedback on New Zealand's legal harvest assurance system. The Forests (Legal Harvest Assurance) Amendment Act 2023 will introduce a legal harvest assurance system into law through the Forests Act 1949. The information MPI gather will be used to inform options for consultation on regulations to implement the legal harvest assurance system. MPI is wanting to hear your thoughts and feedback on the core concepts of legal harvest assurance under the Forests Act 1949. These include:

- identifying the laws that are relevant to deciding if timber or timber products have been legally harvested
- which timber products people should need to register to trade for legal harvest assurance
- thresholds for people needing to register for legal harvest assurance
- the requirements of due diligence systems, and
- exporter requirements.

The issues paper is available on the MPI website: [Legal harvest assurance system for timber – MPI website](#)

Support for Disabled Workers – Feedback request

Are you wanting to support disabled people to thrive in brilliant careers? Are you an employer working in Manufacturing, Engineering, Logistics, Construction or Infrastructure? The Workforce Development Council is wanting to hear from you. Complete the NZ Workforce Development Council survey by clicking here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZKG9Q97>. And help in reducing barriers for disabled people to join our workforce. Contact grace@allisforall.com for more information.

Flexi Squad – Reducing Harm at Work - Register Now

The industry-led project, Whakahaumarū (to safeguard and protect), supported by ACC, aims to address harm in the workplace by designing a comprehensive action plan that is focussed on enhancing health and safety practices across all parts of the manufacturing sector over the next five years. The Employers and Manufacturers Association (EMA) has been contracted by ACC to lead this project on behalf of industry. The success of this project is reliant on the support and input from all parts of the manufacturing sector, across the country. Your participation is invited via the Flexi Squad. The Flex Squad is crucial to the project's success, and will contribute insights, perspectives and lived experiences – ensuring the development of a pragmatic, evidence-based and effective action plan. If you are interested in participating, **please register your interest via [this link](#)** so that we can provide you details of the next steps.

Burnt-pine longhorn beetle flight season to end 18 April

The 2023/2024 *Arhopalus fesus* flight season will end for all New Zealand ports at 23:59 hrs Thursday 18 April 2024. Consignments loaded after this time are not subject to the *Arhopalus fesus* flight season requirements. The Australia forestry importing country phytosanitary requirements will be updated on the MPI website in due course.



In the News

Expert Advisory group appointed – Fast Track Approvals Bill

Panel to Include former forestry manager Murray Parrish

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/political/513908/ministers-announce-advisory-group-for-fast-tracking-projects>

Eliminating barriers to importation of overseas building products

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/building-products-shakeup-lower-prices>

Forest Owners say Clark Foundation report ignores benefits of forestry

<https://www.wpma.org.nz/news/nzfoa-media-release-april-2024>