



THE FORESTS DIALOGUE

ENGAGE! EXPLORE! CHANGE!



TOI-OHOMAI
Institute of Technology

Field Dialogue on Tree Plantations in the Landscape

29 October – 2 November 2018 | Rotorua, New Zealand

CONCEPT NOTE

ABOUT THE TPL INITIATIVE

Tree plantations currently provide a third of the world's industrial wood, a proportion expected to increase significantly in coming decades. They also have great potential to deliver environmental services and social benefits, such as combating climate change and implementing conservation efforts. However, many aspects of tree plantations have been and remain controversial, with concerns that associated environmental and social costs often outweigh economic and other benefits.

The Tree Plantations in the Landscape Initiative explores the evolving state of issues related to tree plantations and planted forests within the larger landscape context through engaging key stakeholder groups at the international, national, and local levels.



The Forests Dialogue (TFD) launched the TPL Initiative in September 2015 at the XIV World Forestry Congress in South Africa as a continuation of the 2008 Intensively Managed Planted Forests (IMPF) Initiative. The first field dialogue was held in Chile in 2016 and the second in Brazil in 2017. The New Zealand Dialogue will build on the lessons learned in these previous dialogues, as well as planned activities at the 4th International Planted Forests Congress in China in October 2018. This Dialogue will be the second effort in partnership with WWF's New Generation Plantations Platform.

The TPL initiative has been developed to enhance discussions that address the following key topic areas:

1. Plantation forests in the global development agenda;
2. Design and implementation of plantation forests in the context of a landscape approach;
3. Approaches to enable good governance and inclusive development;
4. Identifying key externalities associated with the development and management of plantation forests;
5. The diversification of the forms and species composition of plantation forests, the sustainability of plantation forestry systems, and access to and use of new technologies.

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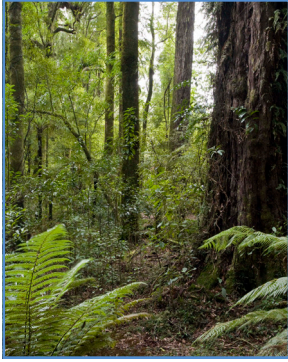
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THE TPL NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

New Zealand is a major global planted forests nation: its 1.7 million hectares of planted forests are the third-largest export earner in the country, comprising 3.4% of New Zealand's GDP¹. As harvest volumes and per-hectare productivity increase, forest owners are researching sustainable intensification to keep these increases within environmental limits.

New Zealand forest ownership structures are complex following the privatization of the state plantation forest system in the late 1980s. Most forests were sold to large international corporate investors, TIMOs, with the Crown retaining just a small proportion of the forests. There was a planting boom in the 1990s driven mainly through small investors and nationally-based investment companies. Māori, New Zealand's indigenous peoples, have become very significant owners of forest lands and planted forests, with over 45% of planted forest on Māori land as a result of the settlement of historic land claims against the Crown since the beginning of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975.

All corporate forests are certified under either FSC or PEFC schemes, however certification levels are much lower for small owners, due predominantly to the cost of certification. The New Zealand chapter of FSC has a unique structure, with a fourth chamber for Māori in addition to the environmental, social, and economic chambers.

In recent years a number of initiatives in support of increased environmental management standards have been developed. The largest of these is the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NES-PF), developed by a collaboration between government agencies and the forest sector. All forestry operations are underpinned by the Principles of Sustainable Forest Management, The Environmental Code of Practice, The New Zealand Forest Accord, and New Zealand's Resource Management Act (RMA). Even with these initiatives, environmental and social concerns remain.

Planted forests have played a major role in New Zealand's climate mitigation approach since the early 1990s, with the country's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) having the global distinction of including planted forests. A significant development in climate mitigation forestry is currently underway, through a new government initiative to plant 1 billion trees in the coming decade. This goal, known as the "One Billion Trees Programme", is aimed at carbon sequestration and achieving nation-wide Paris 2030 goals, as well as enhancing regional economic development and growth.

These new forests are likely to be planted predominantly on pastoral farm land in partnership with Māori organizations, farmers, and forest management companies. Forest area could increase by over 500,000 hectares. This is a major opportunity for New Zealand but it will need to be done sensitively and thoughtfully to avoid long-term unintended consequences. Consideration of social aspects of this programme will be paramount. To support this effort the government has established a new Forestry Agency, Te Uru Rākau.



The following are key topics that will be touched on in the TPL Dialogue:

- ➔ **The opportunity for Māori forestry:** The area of land and forests under Māori control is increasing rapidly as settlements are made by the Crown through the Waitangi Tribunal for redress of past wrongs. More than 45% of planted forests are now on Māori land. The Māori people tend to have a different perspective to corporate forestry operations: their multi-generational approach and guardianship of their lands and forests is known as “Kaitiakitanga”. They are also very interested in different types of forestry systems than the standard radiata pine regimes, which are the norm in 95% of the existing estate.
- ➔ **The Billion Trees Programme on agricultural lands:** These plantings are expected to be quite different from plantings in the past, with more emphasis on the ecosystem services provided by the forests. The initiative faces many logistical and decision-making challenges moving forward and will need to take into consideration the impact on local communities.
- ➔ **Achieving sustainable intensification on the existing forest estate:** With increasing global demand for timber and fibre, New Zealand has been looking at ways to make the most of its existing forest estate by exploring potential increases in biological productivity. This has been supported by a six-year national research programme started in 2013 called ‘Growing Confidence in Forestry’s Future’ (www.gcff.nz).
- ➔ **Role of planted forests and NZ’s Paris commitments:** In the Paris Agreement, New Zealand committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 30% below 2005 levels by 2030². Trees have a role to play in this, as carbon sinks and forestry have been included in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) since 2008. New forests will sequester additional carbon and it is expected that the ETS and carbon



TPL NEW ZEALAND PRIORITIES

The TPL New Zealand Dialogue will provide a venue to address, within a specific New Zealand context, the four priority topic areas identified during the TPL Initiative Scoping Dialogue. These four priority topic areas are:

1. Māori Forestry
2. Sustainable Intensification
3. The Billion Tree Planting Initiative and regional growth
4. Climate mitigation

²<http://www4.unfccc.int/ndcregistry/PublishedDocuments/New%20Zealand%20First/New%20Zealand%20first%20NDC.pdf>



THE DIALOGUE

This multi-stakeholder field dialogue will convene approximately thirty New Zealand and twenty international experts and stakeholders in October 2018 in Rotorua and environs, New Zealand. Participants will arrive in Rotorua, New Zealand, on Monday, October 29th and commence the dialogue on Tuesday, October 30th with a welcome and short introductory session, followed by field visits. The field visits will be concentrated in the Central North Island around Rotorua. Participants will engage in two full-day site visits to local forests and forestry companies, farms, and Māori lands and forestry operations. Thursday and Friday will be located in Rotorua and dedicated to dialogue, using both plenary and small working-group formats.



OUTPUTS

1. A background paper will be commissioned prior to the field dialogue to provide participants with a baseline understanding of the concept and context of tree plantations in New Zealand, and to present ideas to stimulate discussion. It will give an overview of tree plantations in New Zealand landscapes, as well as pertinent government policies. The paper will be finalized and made publicly available after the dialogue.
2. The dialogue co-chairs will prepare an official report summarizing participants' experiences during the site visits and the discussions during the dialogue. The summary report will be distributed widely, and key findings will be presented to priority stakeholders in New Zealand.
3. Communication materials, including one or more targeted pieces with accessible language, will be produced for TFD and partners' websites and social media. There will also be engaging short 30-second videos for social media, as well as 5 and 10-minute edited videos to be posted on TFD and partners' websites.
4. Press outputs include: press conferences before and after the dialogue coordinated with local media outlets; targeted outreach via social media to opinion-shapers; one or more news articles to be published online immediately following the dialogue in regional and international outlets reporting on key messages.



LOOKING AHEAD

At the national level, the field dialogue will help strengthen a stakeholder network of key leaders from government, Māori, the forest sectors, certification bodies, and civil society to support policy initiatives around tree plantations in the landscape. Internationally, findings from the New Zealand field dialogue will provide case information that can inform the design and implementation of best practices for tree plantations elsewhere. Findings from the dialogue will also help frame field dialogues being planned in other countries. A wrap-up meeting will synthesize learnings, create consensus recommendations, and develop a concrete action plan with partners.



NEW ZEALAND DIALOGUE CONVENORS, HOSTS, AND COLLABORATORS

New Generation Plantations



WWF's New Generation Plantations (NGP) idea-sharing platform brings diverse perspectives together to work towards a vision of forest plantations that contribute positively to the welfare of local communities and do not replace natural forests or other important ecosystems.

The Forests Dialogue



TFD provides a neutral platform for dialogue where diverse stakeholders feel welcome and empowered, leading to outcomes that are made durable by the sense of ownership shared by all participants. TFD's process ensures broad participation that enables strong uptake of dialogue outcomes.

Scion



Scion is a Crown Research Institute (CRI) that specialises in research, science, and technology development for the forestry, wood, and wood-derived materials and other biomaterial sectors.

Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology



The Toi-Ohomai Institute of Technology, which has multiple campus locations in the Bay of Plenty and South Waikato regions, offers training in Forest Operations and Forest Management, Wood Processing and Manufacturing as well as Environmental and Resource Management.