In December 1990 the New Zealand Forest Industries Council, as a first step in accepting the challenge of developing a strategic plan for the New Zealand forest industry, convened a day-long conference with the theme "Industry Initiatives for the Future". The main objectives of the conference were:

- to identify and action several immediate working party initiatives which focus on improving the competitive advantage of the forest industry;
- to progress the development of a long-term vision and strategic direction for the industry.

The conference was stimulated by the urgency which both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Forestry placed on developing such a plan of action following the Leaders Summit convened by the Prime Minister earlier in December. A wide cross-section of industry personnel were invited, not on the basis of interest but as individuals who could represent a particular sectional interest but as individuals who could provide an independent view. In all 26 people attended.

By the end of the day's discussions five principle initiatives emerged as projects Council could immediately pursue. These were:

- FRI – Centre of Excellence
- Industry Co-operation – A Shared Vision
- Education and Training
- Funding
- Radiata Pine Promotion.

Working groups have been established to pursue each of these initiatives.

**Labour spokesperson on Forestry**

The Labour Party spokesperson on Forestry, Paul Swain, MP, has announced that he is going to embark on the preparation of a plan which will develop a forestry strategy that will take New Zealand into the 21st Century.

Robin Cutler to split British Forestry Commission powers

The Forestry Commission, Britain's largest land-owner, is to be drastically reformed by the Government. The Commission was bitterly criticised by a House of Commons select committee last year for "conflict of interest" between its twin roles as regulatory body and nationalised industry for forestry.

Since its foundation in 1919, the Commission has been responsible for the planting of millions of acres of alien conifer trees on the most ecologically sensitive parts of Britain and, latterly, for promoting and funding planting by the private sector.