NZ Forest Accord and Principles
As noted in my previous report, representatives of the NZIF were invited to attend an August 29 meeting of Partners to the NZ Forest Accord and Principles held in Wellington, to discuss the Institute's position on these documents. A letter prepared to outline the NZIF position accompanies this report.

The meeting was generally positive. The NZIF draft Indigenous Forest policy was tabled to illustrate the very comprehensive and pro-active NZIF stance on indigenous forestry in New Zealand. It was acknowledged that once the policy is completed and formally adopted by the Institute then the Institute can be expected to actively promote the objects of the policy.

Representatives of Environmental NGOs present at the meeting were interested in identifying any particular cases where the instruments of the NZ Forest Accord could not be followed, while achieving an overall objective of maintaining and enhancing indigenous forests. (The Council in fact hoping to make a field visit to examples of recent forestry development involving the identification and protection of areas of indigenous vegetation, prior to its November meeting.)

Given the NZIF advocacy for consideration of particular Maori forestry interests and the Accord and the recent contacts with the fledgling Maori Forest Industry Association, it was suggested that the Institute might help to facilitate dialogue between the Accord partners and Maori Forestry interests.

Council
All positions on the current NZIF Council are up for re-election prior to the 1998 AGM. I believe that the Institute members have been well served by a strong and active Council in recent years and it is important that we gather a good level of interest from members in standing for Council and providing a basis for renewal and ongoing strength.

Nominations for Council positions will be called for early in 1998 and members are asked to consider their interest in either standing for Council or in nominating other worthy members for such opportunity.

Travel award presentations
This year's recipient of the John Balneaves Award, Rob Prebble, used the funds to study machine operator training in Scandinavia, with a particular emphasis on the prevention of occupational overuse injuries. Rob has prepared an illustrated presentation on the trip and this is being promoted amongst local sections as a good way to extend the findings from the award.

John Galbraith
President

Letter outlines NZIF position
NZIF President John Galbraith has written to the Secretary of the Forest Accord and Principles Partners as follows:

"Thank you for the invitation to attend the August 29 meeting of Partners to the NZ Forest Accord and Principles for Plantation Forest Management in New Zealand. I understand that our letter of March 27 raised some questions and concerns as to the position of the Institute with regard to the Accord and Principles and I hope the following and our discussions at the meeting will clarify the Institute's position on these important documents.

Institute members in general have high regard for the achievement of the parties to the Accord and Principles in developing and concluding such unique agreements. The common ground represented in the agreements provides an environment in which our members can carry out their endeavours in a professional and non-confrontational way, which is the envy of our professional colleagues in many other countries.

As you will recall, the NZIF was invited to become a signatory partner to the Principles in late 1995. Following a survey of our members, a motion was put to our AGM in 1996 that the NZIF become a signatory, but subsequently the motion was lost. Our letter of March 27 conveyed the points of concern identified by our members, which are essentially rooted in particular instruments of the Accord and some aspects of the process followed in the development of the Accord.

"The Principles Objectives state that 'These principles are complementary to the New Zealand Forest Accord (August 1991)'. However other clauses within the Principles directly link to the Accord, such that a signatory to the Principles would in effect be endorsing the Accord. It was recognised that such a position may prevent members from providing services to landowners who were acting lawfully and within the spirit and intent of the RMA.

"The prescriptive nature of Instruments 1 and 2 of the Accord can and have been interpreted to prevent a wider area planning approach, which would otherwise fully meet the Objectives and intent of the Accord. A major area of concern is that landowners, notably Maori, who had not signed the Accord or been consulted during its development were being expected to abide by its provisions and/or being captured by its instruments.

"The intent of the Accord with regard to the protection, enhancement and sustainable management of our remaining indigenous forests is strongly supported. To illustrate the NZIF's own position on the management of our indigenous forests I have attached a copy of our recently developed draft indigenous forest policy for your information. You will see that the