El-Lakany is a national of Egypt. He has a professional career spanning 35 years. He obtained his PhD in Forest Genetics from the University of British Columbia. He joined FAO in 1992 and was appointed Director of the FAO Forest Resources Division, one of the three divisions of FAO Forestry Department in 1996.

Dr El-Lakany succeeds Dr David Harcharik who has moved to the post of Deputy Director-General of FAO.

Wrightson Forestry Services

Wrightson Forestry Services General Manager, John Olssen, announced in April that the previous units of Pine Plan and Aorangi Forestry Services are to be merged. Dennys Guild, previously General Manager for Pine Plan, is to be the South Island Regional Manager in the new organisation. Allan Laurie, previously General Manager of Aorangi Forestry Services, will take responsibility of coordinating the region's wood harvesting and marketing activities. These changes are expected to increase the forestry activities of the company in the South Island.

Caxton Forest Estate Management

In April 1998 Carter Holt Harvey announced changes to how their Caxton Forest Estate is to be managed. After 25 years of management by P.F. Olsen & Co Ltd, management of these plantations will now be incorporated into the Carter Holt Harvey Bay of Plenty District office in Te Teko. Three former Olsen staff have moved over to the new owners of Caxton's forests.

Forest Research

On Wednesday 18th February the New Zealand Forest Research Institute Ltd formally adopted a new sort title, 'Forest Research'. Along with this change was a new logo with its subtitle 'creative wood-based solutions'. According to Chief Executive, Bryce Heard they are symbolic of the changes that are happening within the Institute. The new structure of Forest Research was mentioned in the last issue of NZ Forestry.