

# AGROFORESTRY PROMOTION GROUP — FINAL REPORT

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The Agroforestry Promotion Group (APG) was elected at an Agroforestry Workshop held at the Forest Research Institute in Rotorua on 1–8 December 1983. Members were N. A. Barr, E. D. Buckleigh, B. M. Maskell and C. G. R. Chavasse (convener).

The AGP held its first (and only) meeting on 12 January 1984 at which its purpose was defined: "To obtain agreement on a national policy for diversification of land use by a marriage between farming and tree growing." The strategy adopted was:

- (1) To obtain active involvement of the agricultural sector, especially the N.Z. Farm Forestry Association and Federated Farmers
  - (2) To approach Government to accept agroforestry as an integral part of national land use policy
  - (3) To promote dissemination of information on agroforestry.
- Messrs Chavasse and Barr were elected spokesmen.  
Subsequent events are described below.

## 1. FUNDING

M. G. Darling, Manager, Primary Industries, Bank of New Zealand, kindly funded the outgoings of the APG, explaining that "Agroforestry falls within our area and we are pleased to advise that we are very much aware of Agroforestry and the important place it has in this country's land use."

## 2. CONTACT WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT MINISTERS

### (a) *Initial Contact*

Contact was initiated in December 1983 and continued to July 1984. The Hon. W. Birch, Minister of National Development, the Rt Hon. D. McIntyre, Minister of Agriculture, and the Hon. Dr I. Shearer, Minister of Science and of the Environment, also attended. The Minister of Forests, Hon. J. Elworthy, was unfortunately unable

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to be present. In attendance were I. Trotman and R. Cutler, N.Z. Forest Service; R. Miller, MWD Town and Country Planning Division; Ms K. Beatson, Government Research Unit; and I. Ritchie, MAF Chief Advisory Officer, Economics.

Mr Chavasse presented his report (which had been sent earlier) together with a submission, giving the farmers' point of view, by Mr Barr. The report contained several suggestions concerning the roles various government agencies could play in promoting agroforestry, and also suggested that government should examine the possibility of incorporating agroforestry in a comprehensive land use policy.

The Hon. W. Birch accepted the submissions and at once set up an Officials Committee to examine how the recommendations therein could be put into effect, to report back to him in two weeks. He undertook to keep the APG informed of progress.

On 22 February Mr Birch wrote: "I . . . believe [the meeting] provided a useful opportunity to review and discuss the current situation regarding agroforestry. As a result of the meeting I have asked officials to prepare a paper for those Ministers with a direct interest in the subject and covering:

- "(1) The state of the art, including examination of the comments and conclusions arising out of the FRI Agroforestry Workshop, and the Agroforestry Promotion Group's work.
- "(2) Suggestions and possible options for Government action, including comments on grants and incentives that could be used to encourage agroforestry.
- "(3) Consideration of any desirable changes in land use policy.
- "(4) An assessment of the appropriateness of current research efforts and an indication of any desirable changes.

"I feel I cannot take any further initiatives at this stage until officials have reported. I have, however, asked that the matter be given their prompt attention and once I have received the report I will be in a better position to consider what initiatives (if any) the Government might take in relation to the matters you have raised."

#### *(b) The Officials Committee Report*

The officials started work on the day after the meeting (15 February). I. Trotman acted as liaison man and sent a preliminary assessment to the Commissioner of Works, Wellington; the Director-

General of Agriculture; the Director-General of the DSIR; the Commissioner for the Environment; and the Forest Research Institute. He stated (*inter alia*) that "the Ministers were convinced of the merits of the case for some move towards greater application of agroforestry" and suggested that the final efforts of the officials' committee should be to "Consider Government publishing a statement, to give a lead in fostering complementary and joint agricultural and forest development".

The first draft of the "Officials' Report on Agroforestry Policy" is dated 9 March 1984. It went into the matter in some detail, generally endorsing the APG's suggestions (with the exception of growing species other than radiata pine) and ended with suggestions on planning needs, including the role of central and local government.

The Officials' Report has not been published in spite of repeated requests by the APG and more recently by the President of the N.Z. Farm Forestry Association (NZFFA) to have it released. Possibly this is in part due to the change of Government in July 1984.

On 26 July Mr Birch wrote to Mr Chavasse: "I have appreciated your comments and helpful advice on [agroforestry] over the past few months, and like you hope that the impetus for this worthwhile form of land use will not be lost. I will of course continue to watch developments with interest. Thank you for the support for the initiatives I have endeavoured to carry through in relation to agroforestry."

The Labour Party's manifesto for the election included in its agricultural policy the promotion of agroforestry. A letter from the Hon. C. Moyle to J. Mortimer (President, NZFFA) dated 19 September 1984 states: 'In the light of updated information presented at the technical workshop' (see below) "there is a strong feeling amongst my officials that the March report should be re-drafted before being released."

It would appear that this report will never see the light of day, but it has had its effect, and events have overtaken it.

### *(c) Technical Workshop on Agroforestry*

There is some evidence that agroforestry was discussed by Cabinet from time to time, from February 1984 to July, and a major effect of the unpublished Officials' Report was the organising of a Technical Workshop on agroforestry in Dunedin in May 1984. The "Proceedings" of this were promulgated in July 1984. It was attended by staff of the Ministry of Agriculture (both research and

administrative), Forest Service (FRI and Head Office), DSIR (Soil Bureau, Grasslands Division, Applied Biochemistry Division, Head Office), MWD, Department of Lands and Survey, Prime Minister's Department, and Massey University. The principal conclusion from the Workshop was: "Agroforestry could prove a useful diversification and wise land use for particular farmers over a wide range of environments." However, the general recommendation to Government was that the approach should be "low key" rather than major promotion.

### 3. FIELD PROMOTION

The major burden of field promotion has been borne by Mr Barr. He felt sure that there was "a degree of inertia" in official circles (including the Forest Service) which had to be overcome, and that the initiative must come from farmers. But farmers, also, needed "educating". His first line of approach was to present articles in the *N.Z. Farmer*, giving practical details on agroforestry. Then, at the NZFFA AGM and Conference in Timaru, 9-12 April 1984, he proposed that "demonstration areas be set up by our organisation to teach farmers the correct methods of pruning and thinning". This was passed with some enthusiasm.

Mr Barr attended a meeting with D. Rutherford (NZFFA South Island representative), Dr G. B. Sweet and L. Knowles (FRI) and I. Trotman, G. McKenzie and J. Edmonds (NZFS Advisory Division). His proposal was that each local branch of the NZFFA should set up advisory groups (which would include NZFS Advisory officers) to promote agroforestry, and especially correct tending of tree crops. He also worked on a booklet, together with D. Franklin and J. Edmonds, which was subsequently edited by H. Bunn (previously Director of Forest Production Division, FRI) and promulgated at the 1985 AGM and Conference of the NZFFA in Hamilton.

During 1984 and early 1985, Mr Barr spent a good deal of time in the South Island on promotion work, contacting individual farmers, and taking an active part in field days and the like. Among these were the following gatherings:

- High Country Farmers' Field Day at Miller's Flat, West Otago. Some 1500 people attended this gathering. Mr Barr's agroforestry message was well received, especially the need for timely pruning in a district where trees are prone to snow damage.

- Invermay Field Day. This was attended by some 2300 people. Mr Barr lectured groups at hourly intervals, and again the message was well received.
- The South Otago Forestry Discussion Group. Members of this group now actively practise agroforestry, and their plantings are attracting wide attention in the region.
- Strathalan Field Day and Seminar, Southland. There is growing interest in this region also, and indeed the Forest Service is practising agroforestry in Otago Coast Forest.

In the North Island (especially Northland) Mr Barr has attended several seminars, and also field days in the Bay of Islands Region.

Following a seminar at Whangarei under the aegis of the Northland United Council, an "Agroforestry Demonstration Plantings Programme" has been set up, run jointly by MAF, Lands Department, Federated Farmers, Forest Service and NZFFA.

#### 4. FEDERATED FARMERS

Following the meeting with Cabinet Ministers in February 1984, Mr Chavasse visited R. D. McLagan of Federated Farmers. Mr McLagan offered the full support of his organisation and suggested that one of his staff should join the APG as a contact man. The APG submission to the ministers was sent to Mr McLagan, and thereafter he was kept informed of developments.

At the 1984 NZFFA AGM and Conference, J. Mortimer was elected President. It seemed at that stage that the NZFFA would take over the aegis of the APG, and Mr Mortimer was urged to forge close links with Federated Farmers. He accordingly made contact with P. Elworthy, President of Federated Farmers. Mr Chavasse also wrote to Mr Elworthy, who replied that he and Mr Mortimer would set up a small group to liaise on this matter. Since then the NZFFA and Federated Farmers have worked together, and the APG has dropped out of the picture.

#### 5. NZ FOREST SERVICE

Throughout, the APG has kept close contact with Dr G. B. Sweet, of the Forest Research Institute, who has been punctilious in keeping the APG informed of developments. Contact has also been maintained with NZFS Head Office Advisory Division (I. Trotman). Mr Barr, especially, has maintained contact and worked actively with field staff, both of the NZFS Advisory Division and FRI (L. Knowles, D. Franklin, N. Ledgard especially).

However, much "behind-the-scenes" activity is unknown to the APG. The NZFS certainly worked hard to have the Officials Committee Report completed and promulgated, but met some reluctance from other government agencies, and has itself come to a firm policy stance on agroforestry. This was presented to an Agroforestry Seminar held in Kaikohe on 11 April 1985 in a paper prepared by the Director-General of Forests, A. Kirkland. This sets out the "Joint Departmental Policy on Agroforestry", endorsed in March 1985 by "the respective Ministers". It would appear that this joint policy was triggered off by the meeting of the APG with Cabinet Ministers in February 1984, and it indicates that the APG's work is done. A copy of the policy is given in Appendix 1.

## 6. NZ INSTITUTE OF FORESTERS

Mr Chavasse informed NZIF of the work of APG in the early stages. The NZIF AGM and Conference in May 1984 had as its theme "Forestry and the Small Grower". Mr Chavasse was asked to present the Keynote Address on this subject. This paper was well received.

## 7. NZ FARM FORESTRY ASSOCIATION

Certain facets of the APG's contacts with NZFFA have already been noted under "Field Promotion" and "Federated Farmers" above. In May 1984 Mr Chavasse sent to J. Mortimer, President of NZFFA, a copy of the APG's submission to Cabinet ministers, of February 1984. Mr Chavasse also sent a copy of this paper to the new Minister of Forests, the Hon. Koro Wetere. In his reply, Mr Wetere wrote, "I very much appreciate you forwarding this information and also for your offer of assistance in any way in the development of this concept. I will also . . . be discussing this matter with my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture." Mr Mortimer also wrote to the Hon. C. Moyle (Minister of Agriculture), and asked Mr Chavasse to prepare a submission for a meeting with him (Mr Moyle) later. Both Mr Wetere and Mr Moyle wrote to Mr Mortimer advising him of the current position on 19 September 1984.

Mr Mortimer then arranged for a meeting with the Primary Production and Marketing Caucus Committee, and asked Mr Chavasse to attend, on 12 December 1984. Unfortunately, Wellington airport was closed on that day, and Mr Chavasse was prevented from travelling. J. Mortimer, B. Treeby, and B. Gimblett

(all of the NZFFA) attended, and presented Mr Chavasse's submission. The final "Recommendation" in this paper reads:

"As a means of achieving optimum land use, there is a need to integrate farming and forestry. It is our firm view that a means of achieving this is agroforestry. Rather than the present low key approach, we believe that agroforestry needs major promotion by all the agencies (State and private) involved in land use and development.

"We also believe there should be a major emphasis on production of decorative and special-purpose timbers for export, accompanied by a scaling down of conventional forestry, with general-purpose tree species on poorer soils and more remote and steep sites."

The outcome of the meeting with the Caucus Committee was conveyed to Mr Mortimer by G. Carroll, Research Officer, Government Research Unit, on 15 March 1985, and noted: "Draft Policy for Agroforestry are being drafted by the Forest Service, MAF and Lands and Survey Dept. There will be a chance for public input on these. These movements have followed your Delegation's meeting with the Primary Production and Marketing Caucus Committee."

On 4 March 1985 J. Mortimer wrote to J. J. Hosking, chairman of the NZFFA Past Presidents' Committee, noting that "It was our feeling that this concept (agroforestry) was an essential ingredient of farm forestry and we should continue to give it every support . . . Executive would like your committee to make this a priority item on your agenda at your April meeting and come up with some recommendations as to how the Farm Forestry Association can best help agroforestry."

## CONCLUSION

The APG meeting with Cabinet ministers in February 1984 triggered off considerable interest in agroforestry both among government organizations and in Cabinet — both the National administration up to July 1984 and subsequently the Labour government. Much activity was unknown to the APG but, although it seems that initially some of the agricultural sector was cautious, the position now is that there is a joint policy involving the various agencies which is strongly supportive of agroforestry. Increasing research has been undertaken, both by the FRI and by agricultural research groups (MAF, DSIR). Federated Farmers is also in favour of the concept.

Tacitly, the work of the APG has been gradually assumed by the NZFFA, which has become the leading protagonist of agroforestry. And, on this issue, the NZFFA has forged close links with Federated Farmers.

The work of the APG can thus come to an end, as it has achieved its aims.

## APPENDIX 1

### The Joint Departmental Policy on Agroforestry

The joint policy was endorsed in March 1985 by the Ministers of Agriculture and Forests. The policy is based on the Officials Committee Report which was completed in March 1984 (not released), the Technical Workshop on Agroforestry recommendations dated June 1984, and subsequent interdepartmental discussions (which have included consideration of the 1984 Budget). The basis of departments' approach to agroforestry, within the framework of current activities is to:

- (1) Ensure that landowners are made aware of the potential contribution agroforestry can make to land use diversification through:
  - Planned programmes to provide agroforestry demonstrations in key districts (using State forests, Crown development blocks and private land as necessary).
  - Development of extension packages on agroforestry (through good liaison between government departments, agencies and interested private organisations).
  - Extended extension programmes to those areas likely to give a high level of return in both the short and long term, as overall priorities allow.
  - Further development of the computer-based simulation model SILMOD and make it available to allow informed decision making.
- (2) Encourage integrated land use on lands of the Crown to increase overall productivity and product diversification through:
  - Extension of forest grazing operations on a range of State forests throughout the country.
  - Establishment of a well-managed agroforestry component into appropriate Crown development blocks.
- (3) Ensure that the policy environment does not constrain the best use of resources in agroforestry by:
  - Assessing the impact of Government interventions and removing market distortions and other discriminating factors wherever possible.
  - Maintaining competitive sales procedures for State wood so that they provide a realistic market base for the private grower.
  - Reviewing legislation to allow greater flexibility in patterns of ownership including co-operatives and joint ventures.
  - Widening the statistical base to monitor the development of agroforestry.



- (4) Identify the major constraints of the production and marketing of agroforestry products and design research programmes in those areas of highest payoff by:
  - Noting that recent evaluations have identified animal performance (including cattle) studies, shelterbelt management and the use of special purpose trees as areas of high priority.
  - Encourage diversification within agroforestry systems.
- (5) Seek "equal opportunity" for agroforestry under Town and Country planning procedures:
  - The general departmental policy is to foster the most productive use of the land; encourage efficient *sustainable* production, and to encourage a *diversified rural economy*.
  - Planners and regional/district councils should be made aware of the opportunities for agroforestry and the potential contribution this could make to their objectives.