

tax breaks, forestry as an investment for individuals has taken off. This phenomenon is without doubt due to the withdrawal of the State as a major but non-commercial player in the forestry sector. Social and political imperatives have always negated any genuine attempts by

Government foresters to manage and market commercial forestry at a profit.

Now that we are no longer burdened by such constraints our profession should hasten to protect both itself and the thousands of people who now depend on our knowledge. Formal registration of profes-

sional foresters having now been achieved, the next step is to ensure that the public are well informed of their existence.

J. G. Groome

Forestry History Report

We should not overlook the importance attached to forestry history in other parts of the world. Indeed, Forest History is a Subject Group in IUFRO Division 6 (Social and Economic Aspects of Forestry, Group 6.07). The Forest History Subject Group is divided into four different working parties on the following subjects: ecological forest history, timber and timber industries, tropical forest history, and history of hunting culture. The Group holds global meetings in conjunction with the five-yearly meetings of the umbrella IUFRO World Group, the next being in Malaysia in 2000. There are over 300 members at present and membership of the subject group is free, to encourage people to take part. If New Zealanders wish to participate in Group 6.07, they should send their addresses to Dr Elisabeth Johann, AG Forstgeschichte im OFA, A-1130, Wien, Wlassakstrasse 56, Austria.

While in Vienna earlier this year the Dean of Forestry at Canterbury, Ron O'Reilly, took the initiative to contact Dr Johann and tell her of the developing interest in this country in New Zealand forestry history, leaving some published historical material with her. Dr Johann offers a forestry history course at the University of Freiburg. There are other forestry history courses at universities in Vienna and Munich. In all these courses emphasis is placed on both the social and the economic implications of forestry policy and forest management; the modern perspective is the comprehensive link between mankind and the forests.

Our steering group has continued to promote the forestry archive in the MacMillan-Brown Collection and has alerted a major forestry company holding historical records to its potential use. The steering group is not, and should not be, "pushy" in such approaches; the main objective is to emphasise the importance of records being kept in safe places. Material in the MacMillan-Brown forestry archive is kept in a secure library store which is heated and so maintains a fairly even temperature, has a fire alarm and contains spacious, high-quality mobile

shelving. The University is able to secure experienced archivists from time to time to order and catalogue the material. Organisations depositing material in the archive can retain control over it in various ways. They can stipulate conditions of access to it. For instance, they can arrange to be told about all research enquiries and can refuse to release any commercially sensitive data. (The MacMillan-Brown Collection already contains records of some commercial organisations.) Also depositors can continue to have access themselves to the materials they provided. The University would send faxes or photocopies to them of any records desired.

Over the last few months we have received several welcome approaches from people who possess, or know of, historical records or sources. We hope such contacts will keep on coming. Also it is gratifying to report from the farm forestry

scene that J.J. (Joll) Hosking is writing the history of the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association.

It is possible to speculate on one – doubtless there will be several – possible sequence in the continued development of New Zealand forestry history. One step is the deposit of records in safe, publicised places. A next step could be the interpretation of such records and the publication of accounts on circumscribed forestry subjects by well-informed specialists who would usually not be professional historians. The latter could come in later and fit these vignettes into larger historical pictures which would often extend beyond forestry *per se*. But first things come first; hence the current emphasis on safeguarding the records.

Peter McKelvey



Observations on New Zealand forest policy

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In May, 1996 I had the opportunity to make a brief visit to New Zealand, visiting different forests and learning about forestry in this country. For me, the visit highlighted two outstanding features of New Zealand forest policy. The first is the privatisation of much of the forest activities. The second is the change in attitude towards the indigenous forests on private land, from seeing them as an obstacle to development to acknowledging their value as heritage and renewable resource (Ministry of Forestry, 1993). The forest policy,

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although obviously in a dynamic phase of adaptation and development, raises an important issue in terms of forest uses.

Within New Zealand, it appears that there has been a change from "multiple" use or "multiple purpose" forestry to "dominant purpose" forestry. The control of most indigenous forests has been transferred to the new Department of Conservation, while the productive plantation forestry was privatised. Naturally, opinions among the various interest groups are controversial. The plantation group wants "predominant purpose" to be interpreted as excluding any production function from the indigenous forest. This is supported

by some conservation groups who dismiss the possibility that 'forestry can ever be practised sustainably in unlogged forest in such a way that ecosystems are not disrupted' (N. Dudley cited in Sutton, 1995). Accordingly, the management effects of the so-called Tasman Accord 'essentially separate the forest productive function from the protection function' (Sutton, 1995), similar to the "Bannwaldkonzept" in the history of forestry in Central Europe.

This creates twin primary goals, of conserving natural forests as heritage and for protection, and of producing high-quality solid wood, which at least presently seem to be regarded as mutually exclusive. This current position on multiple versus predominant (in the extreme, single) purpose forestry, the compatibility of forest management and ecosystem conservation in indigenous forests, the feasibility to produce timber exclusively in plantations and to separate productive and protective forests are affected by contemporary, particularly commercial, factional and political interests rather more than informed concerns for forest and landscape ecosystem functioning. In plantation forestry, the concept revives the former "Kielwassertheorie" which was in vogue in Germany in the 1960s.

The binary simplicity of the predominant-use concept is persuasive but dangerous in so far as it may lead to forest and land-use decisions which are irrational, not consistent with available scientific knowledge, ecologically unnecessary and economically and socially unfavourable, particularly if carried dogmatically to the extreme by factional interests. The concept is akin to beliefs in German forestry in the past. As in Germany, the concept will certainly not stagnate but eventually develop in the direction of greater discrimination and diversity at management unit and landscape levels. It is possible that social and economic development in New Zealand will lead forestry and conservation planning along the same path which has been followed by sustainable development towards "Waldfunktionenplanung" in modern German forestry. In the Waldfunktionen plan forest functions are allocated to a concrete area (forest stand, compartment, catchment etc.) singly or in combination in accordance with needs and possibilities, and may be changed as conditions change. This system integrates the various forest functions according to site-specific needs and potentials, and social priorities. The application of this concept in the management of natural mixed forests in New Zealand is feasible and operationally simple if an efficient geographic and management information system is installed.

The relationship of conservation to

production in indigenous forests and the feasibility of admission of silviculture and utilisation in parts of the area, are still debated by the public, NGOs, government and industry. Published material on the debate exhibits the usual deficiencies and distortion of information, and refusal to accept available scientific knowledge by interest and action groups which seem to be inherent to the subject worldwide. This being the case, though, the very constructive way of cooperation in a mutually independent manner (different from many other timber-producing countries) between most NGOs, the Government and the forestry industries, is exemplary and a guarantee for maintaining the dynamics, adaptability and elasticity which are essential for success in forestry.

The focus in *Pinus radiata* plantation forestry on the production of high-quality, clear timber of adequate dimensions capable of competing successfully with the qualities produced by other countries, is rational and feasible. High-quality, large-sized coniferous softwood will be versatile enough to regain old and find new niches in the constantly changing world market, provided it is produced efficiently (low-cost, low-risk strategy). On another front though, the continued decline of production of high-quality tropical hardwood and of the productivity of the permanent forest estate in the Asia-Pacific region and the limited resources for export in Africa and tropical America will add value to New Zealand hardwoods in the future. In this context, the future prospects and role of indigenous forests as a source of diversified high-quality softwood and hardwood timber to meet future and, at least partly, unpredictable national and international demands are apparently underrated in favour of planted pine.

It may be prudent, therefore, at least to continue current research, experimental trials and management activities in the indigenous beech and podocarp-hardwood forests. It would also be important to strengthen and expand research activities towards sustainable development of management and conservation. Sustainable development could also be supplemented with activities to grow indigenous and exotic tree species in biologically diverse, mixed plantations. In the longer term, perhaps a more thorough and comprehensive review of the subject would show that a revision of the present official position on timber production from indigenous forests might be warranted.

In summary, during my short visit to New Zealand, the impression I obtained of forest policy, silviculture, utilisation, role of private and public sector participation, confirm the experience that the basic principles of system management and conservation at all hierarchic levels are transferable between countries and biogeographic regions. It also confirmed that the main differences are not between principal features and processes of the ecosystems, but between phases of cultural and economic development. Much could be learnt from critically analytical systems research into the history of the forestry and landscape ecosystems in relation to phases of cultural development in Europe (Germany), New Zealand and tropical Southeast Asia (Sarawak) with extension to the year 2100.

References

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- Sutton, W.R.J. 1995. The story of the Tasman & Forestry Accords in New Zealand. Rotorua, Tasman Forestry, pp 11.



Pruning in Kaingaroa Forest.