



Distr.
GENERAL

TIM/SEM.1/2003/R.6 (Summary)
6 January 2003

Original: ENGLISH

Seminar on
STRATEGIES FOR THE SOUND USE OF WOOD
Poiana Brasov, Romania
24-27 March 2003

Promotion of wood and forest products in New Zealand
Session II

Paper by Mr. Shaun Killerby
Market Analyst, Strategic Market Intelligence Group, Forest Research, New Zealand

Summary

Over the past century, New Zealanders have successfully established a national plantation forest estate, primarily comprised of fast-growing *Pinus radiata*. Initially designed to complement the indigenous forest harvest, commercial logging from indigenous forests has now almost entirely ceased. The plantation estate consequently promotes the conservation of native forest, meets a large proportion of the domestic market for forest products (estimated at NZ\$2 billion including imports), and also generates over NZ\$3.5 billion of export revenue.

New Zealand exporters tend to promote their wood and forest products as renewable and environmentally friendly. These themes are particularly strong in the Asia-Pacific region, where New Zealand pine products are promoted as substitutes for tropical timbers obtained from non-sustainable sources. Due to international market requirements, many New Zealand producers have sought certification of their forests.

Given the nature of the domestic plantation resource and its role in conservation, there is presently no significant demand within New Zealand for certified wood and forest products. There is some concern, however, about the environmental and social integrity of the sources of the tropical

hardwoods imported. With indigenous hardwoods increasingly unavailable for harvest, imports of tropical woods are set to increase, fuelling calls for certification.

Promotion of wood has not been a major issue within New Zealand except within the building industry, where wood is gradually being substituted with steel, masonry and composite products. The New Zealand timber industry has responded with User Guides and Design Manuals aimed at helping designers and builders specify and use wood. Additionally, the industry is starting to work together to address wood quality concerns.

One underlying concern about the promotion of wood and forest products in New Zealand, however, is that the industry has tended to focus on timber growth and supply rather than wood fibre consumption and demand. A variety of initiatives are now underway to shift industry focus to higher value, differentiated products and services. This strategy requires market intelligence, matching the domestic plantation forest resource to both current and impending market requirements. The emphasis in this strategy is not on educating the public about wood, but rather educating industry about the changing social, economic and environmental considerations and requirements of the public.

Key words: wood production, forest products, sustainability, marketing, and market intelligence.
