

Accompanying Paper of explanation in support of limited exemptions for Maori Land Owners of planted forests to Criteria 10.9.3.

**National Standard for Certification of Plantation Forest
Management in New Zealand**

Pre Approved Version 5.2

1. Introduction

An important issue for consideration in the development of a National New Zealand FSC Standard is how land in multiple, Maori, ownership may be permitted, under certain conditions, to be converted from a state of regenerating natural vegetation to planted forest and still be eligible for FSC certification. The premise for this consideration arises from Criteria 10.9.

10.9 Plantations established in areas converted from natural forests after November 1994 normally shall not qualify for certification. Certification may be allowed in circumstances where sufficient evidence is submitted to the certification body that the manager/owner is not responsible directly or indirectly of such conversion

Favourable consideration of this submission by the FSC International Board would prevent further perpetuation of a historical, social injustice to the indigenous (Maori) land owners in New Zealand.

A series of iterations were carried out with the participation of representatives from the four NZ Chambers (Maori (Indigenous), Environment, Social and Economic) to consider this Criteria within the NZ context. Unanimous agreement on the following proposed conditions was reached by the Standards Development Group. These same conditions were advertised for stakeholder comment in 2010 resulting in further support with no adverse comments being received.

The proposed clause for Criteria 10.9 is as follows:

The Proposed Clause

Indicator 10.9.3

Lands in multiple, Maori ownership containing naturally occurring vegetation can be converted to planted forest provided:

Verifiers

- c) Evidence is available to show that the area to be planted was in pasture prior to 1994.
- b) Areas of natural vegetation that were not previously in pasture (as per a) which are contained within a land block where new plantations are established, shall be identified as reserves, protected and managed as per 6.4. ***Areas which contain viable populations of threatened species are also to be protected as per the provisions of 6.2***
- c) The total FMU containing the new planted forests shall meet the reserve set aside provisions of 10.5.8

Notes

- a) Evidence that the land was pasture would most likely be provided from aerial photos.
- b) 6.4 is the section that covers all the types of reserves. The extract from the existing draft standard is:

6.4.1.2 *Reserve areas shall be classified as:*

- a) Representative indigenous areas including non forested areas and wetlands*
- b) Rare ecosystems (a subset of (a))*
- c) Indigenous habitat for rare, endangered or threatened species (covered in 6.2)*
- d) Indigenous riparian zones covered in 10.2.1 – 10.2.4*
- e) Indigenous wildlife corridors (covered in 10.2.6)*

(the above classifications are not exclusive of each other (c), (d), (e) are representative indigenous areas and may be rare but have been specifically listed as being required by other sections of the Standard and are therefore dealt with in those sections.)

Note that FSC requires that these reserve areas are managed as such but they are not required to be formally gazetted under law.

- c) This refers to the newly revised – NZ Standard. Under provisions of 10.5.8, the total set aside area would be equivalent to a minimum of 10% of the productive area of the FMU.

2. Reasons for the exemption to the non clearance rules under Criteria 10.9

This proposal is made in context of the historic circumstances that accelerated the alienation of land 'owned' by Maori (indigenous peoples of New Zealand) with resultant adverse impacts on their social, cultural and economic circumstances.

This proposal will enable the indigenous land owners to enhance their social, cultural and economic well-being by enabling them to establish commercial, planted forests on those parts of their land that were previously cleared and used for agricultural purposes. For various reasons, these lands are no longer used for such purposes and may be in the process of reverting to indigenous vegetation cover. The exemption is not intended to allow lands that have not previously been in pasture to be cleared for conversion to plantation forestry.

3. Reasons for Maori land to be treated as a special case for limited exemption under Criteria 10.9.

3.1 Maori Land Loss and adverse effects on Maori social, cultural and economic development.

Modern Maori land-based economic development is severely limited by a number of historical events and policies. The catastrophic loss of Maori land is illustrated in Table 1 (below) highlights the now vital role that these remaining land resources have for the future well-being and development of Maori people.

Table 1 illustrates also the parallel decline in Maori population as land was initially alienated. This fact highlights the cultural, social and economic importance of the land to Maori people. Illustrated also is the subsequent exodus of Maori from their ancestral rural communities to urban communities in their search for employment. What is not illustrated is the devastating loss of identity, self-esteem and social well-being that continues to plague existing and future generations of Maori.

Today, ancestral Maori land is still the hub of tribal identity and customary values and Maori owned land, wherever possible, provides economic opportunities for its owners. Despite protective legislation under the Maori Land regulations (Ture Whenua Maori Land Act,

1993), it is still under pressure from forces of alienation (acquisition for or zoning as reserves, landscape and biodiversity protection, land taxes (rates), and purchase or long term lease).

The 5.6% of remaining Maori owned land is all that remains to enable Maori to redress past grievances and it is imperative that they be given every opportunity to make their own decisions about the use, protection and management of their lands within their own cultural and customary context.

Table 1:

Year	Area of Maori land (million hectares)	Percentage of Maori land to Total land in NZ (%)	Total Maori Population In NZ (000)	Maori as Percentage of Total NZ Population (%)	Maori Living in Urban Areas (%)
1840	26.8	99	Approx 100 –150	99	?
1860	9.6	32	56	48	?
1891	4.5	17	44	6	6
1939	1.8	7	88	5	17%
1980	1.2	5	277	7	79%
2006	1.5	5.6	644	15.5 *	84.4%

*change in definition now includes genealogical descent from a Maori ancestor.

3.2 Maori desire to connect to the land (turangawaewae) is strong as is their aspiration for self-determination

Despite unprecedented levels of Maori land alienation in the history of New Zealand, and parallel implementation of policies of social and cultural destabilisation, Maori aspirations for self-determination have not diminished. Maori peoples search for social justice and self-determination has instead been steeled by the vents of the past and the remnants of land that remain are considered by Maori owners as an essential platform to strengthen their attainment to this aspiration.

Maori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa (New Zealand). They are *tangata whenua* (literally, meaning people of the land). From a Māori perspective identity is defined by *whakapapa* (lineage or genealogy) which links all members of a tribe to common descent lines as people. To Maori, *whakapapa* extends beyond the human chain of relationships and links humans to all living species. This web of genealogical connection, however, assumes great significance when it connects to Maori primeval entities including *Papatuanuku* (the Earth Mother) and other guardian deities of the Maori spiritual world. It is through these latter connections that Maori were able to construct their ideologies and maintain a holistic relationship of sustainable management with their total environment, including, maintaining their right to self-determination.

Treaty of Waitangi 1840

The right of Maori to make free decisions about the development and protection of their land and natural resources has always been a priority of the highest order for them. The Treaty of Waitangi is a cornerstone agreement reached by representatives of the British Crown and Maori chiefs in 1840. Maori support for the Treaty of Waitangi was largely premised on the second Article of the Treaty which guaranteed to iwi (Maori tribes) their “Tino Rangatiratanga” (self-determination) and the “*full, exclusive and undisturbed possession*” of Maori land and customary resources to all iwi who exercised control over their tribal domains.

At the time the treaty was signed there were over 100,000 Maori people in New Zealand and settlers numbered 2,000 only. This proportional advantage would have given great confidence and faith to Maori that the Treaty principles would be enforced. Following the dramatic increase in European immigration to the New Zealand colony in the more than 40 years following the Treaty signing, the balance of populations was reversed and Maori rapidly became a minority interest in their own country. Eventually the demand for Maori

land could not be met by legislative due process and some of the most fertile land was acquired by Crown confiscation often for demeanors precipitated by orchestrated government and military confrontations with Maori leaders and iwi groups.

The Treaty of Waitangi has never been entrenched in state legislation but its principles have been inserted in the regulatory provisions of certain legislation and adopted from time to time by state sectors. In 1975, the Treaty of Waitangi Act was passed and a tribunal of enquiry, the Waitangi Tribunal, was established to investigate and make recommendations on the claims of Maori tribes. This initiative has not only resulted in the redress of many injustices to Maori, it has also produced a significant library of knowledge of a historic and customary record that was never available to the public of New Zealand. It also provided an undeniable proof of social injustice that had previously been denied and pushed aside by Crown representatives.

United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

New Zealand signed the Declaration in 2010. Maori tribal groups are fully supportive of the right of self determination provided in Article 32 of the Declaration. The Declaration reflects their aspirations to freely determine and strengthen their political, economic, social and cultural systems and distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, and participate fully in the life of the State in regard to those aspects. The Declaration also meets Maori aspirations in related rights associated with their lands, territories and natural resources consistent with their customs, traditions and traditional systems.

3.3 Barriers to the Utilisation of Maori Land

In practical terms, putting Maori land into some productive use is far different from non-Maori land. The fact that, proportionately, so much Maori land is still in an undeveloped state is a testament to the many disincentives that exist to the productive development of Maori owned land.

Definition of Maori Land

“Māori land” is defined by Te Ture Whenua Māori Act 1993. This definition is used by the Māori Land Court whenever it is required to determine the status of Māori land. The status may be one of the following:

- I. Māori freehold land: Land that, with very few exceptions, has not been out of Māori ownership. The Māori Land Court determines whether land is Māori freehold land.
- II. Māori customary land: Land held by Māori in accordance with tikanga Māori. It has not been transferred into freehold title by the Māori Land Court, nor ceded to the Crown. Before 1840, all land was Māori customary land (Table 1). Today, the exact amount is unknown but is believed to be extremely small.

- III. General land owned by Māori: Land owned by five or more people, where the majority of the owners are Māori

3.3.1 Maori land in multiple ownership

Multiple ownership of Maori lands creates many unique issues for the owners. An example is where the original owners of a land block which may have been registered in the 1880s, for example, allow their children or successors receive shares in the block. When this occurs over three, four, five or more generations, there is an explosion in the number of owners and, generally, a corresponding fragmentation and diminution in the shares held by each living owner. This situation creates a number of consequences for owners wishing to develop the land.

- i. It is difficult and may be costly to establish an ownership data base that accurately records the names of owners and their addresses. This is a necessary prerequisite for effective communication and decision-making with land owners. This task is also made difficult by the very high geographic mobility of owners. The costs of establishing and maintaining a stand-alone, owner database is often beyond the reach of many Maori entities.
- ii. Where non-government Maori land data bases have been established, many of the owners experience high transaction costs that often exceed the monetary value of individual owners' shares or the actual benefit they receive from these entities. This may act as disincentive to owner cooperation in filling out forms and supplying information.
- iii. Complex bureaucratic processes coupled with high transaction costs also creates difficulties for arranging meetings of owners to enable them to make decisions about existing and future uses. There are sometimes thousands of owners in a single block and they are often dispersed all over the country and offshore.

3.3.2 Incapacity to raise Development Capital

Complexities created by historical, legal processes of land tenure continue to plague the capacity of Maori land owners to raise development capital. Such capital is not able to be secured against the land. Some innovative and workable solutions include taking security over assets on or to be developed on the land. Planted forests enterprises enable Maori owners to structure capital investments to overcome this impediment.

If land-base enterprises fail for whatever reason, Maori land owners, unlike non-Maori land owners, do not have the option to mortgage or trade the land to recover to enable them to achieve a degree of financial recovery from their hardship.

3.3.3 Undeveloped Maori lands are characterised by low fertility, isolation, difficult terrain

These lands are largely the remnants of a process of historical acquisitions which has seen the transfer of the most fertile, commercially attractive and productive lands to the Crown and/or private ownership since the late 1870's.

A high percentage of remaining, undeveloped, Maori land is, therefore, characterised by low fertility, located in geographically difficult and isolated terrain. A significant proportion is also characterised by a previous history of pastoral farming or grazing activity that may have commenced as early as the 1940's but for many reasons has since been abandoned or else used sparingly for different stock related activities. Often, this land is not in high demand and requires significant and prolonged capital injection to enable it to sustain any viable development.

3.3.4 Maori undeveloped land is a target for free public reserves and ecosystem services

Undeveloped Maori lands, over time, have attracted the attention of both government and local territorial authorities because of their potential to provide national, regional and local reserves and valuable ecosystem services. The problem for Maori owners has always been the insidious nature of acquisitions which include wholesale public reserve acquisitions under state legislation coupled with dubious 'purchases', the implementation of territorial local government legislation to zone land for public use and to prevent its development through the imposition of natural and landscape values.

The Nitrates Emissions policy currently applied to reduce critical nitrate emissions into Central North Island (New Zealand) lakes and rivers encourages the continuance and establishment of plantation forests because of its relatively low rate of nitrate emission in comparison to other land uses (pastoral, real estate). Only reserves of indigenous vegetation have similar low emission rates. The downside for Maori land owners is that future land use flexibility may be stifled unless rules of flexible land use are built into these policies.

3.4 The Benefits of Plantation Forests for Maori land owners

For Maori land owners, plantation forestry offers significant benefits that are not available under other rural land uses. Plantation forests provide economic, cultural and social benefits for the Maori land owners as well as providing valuable ecosystem services. It (radiata pine) has a cycle that coincides with each inter-generational node and provides a solid long-term financial return. Maori communities have been intimately involved in the radiata forest industry in New Zealand since its beginning in the early 1920's. Maori now make up 25% of those employed in the forestry industry in New Zealand but are only 15% of the total population.

Over 20 percent of all plantation forests in New Zealand are located on Maori-owned land. Interestingly, only a very small proportion of the crop is actually owned by the Maori land owners. The majority of the crop on Maori land is owned and controlled by forestry companies with a small proportion being owned by the Government through long term leases. Maori landowners are optimistic that a significant transfer of forests will occur to Maori ownership over the next 10 to 20 years.

Government is progressively transferring its interests in the leases to the Maori land owners. Recently, a number of tribal groups negotiated a collective Treaty Settlement which saw the transfer of 176,000 hectares of forestry land vested in their ownership. The vested lands contain New Zealand's premier, radiata pine, plantation forest – the Kaingaroa Forest.

Maori are demonstrating a very healthy appetite for self-determination in the plantation and general forestry industry. The new owners of the CNI forestry lands have signalled their clear intention to move from a position as passive land lords and, instead, move to a position as owners and managers of the forestry crop. Similar arrangements are being contemplated in other regions in New Zealand. This movement coincides with favorable forecasts of increased global demand for wood products as a result of demographic changes and income distribution and the less favourable life cycle attributes of competitive products including concrete, steel and aluminium.

Critical to the success of Maori as key future player in the forestry sector, particularly as a plantation forest owner and successful land owner, is access to the market. At this point in time, Maori in New Zealand are placing heavy reliance on Forest Stewardship accreditation to ensure that this doorway remains open.

3.5 The benefit and unique role of Maori in the sustainable management of plantation forests

Maori as tangata whenua (people of the land), have a spiritual connection with the natural world (te taiao) which is firmly imbedded in their Maori customs and practices. This concept is called Kaitiakitanga. Maintaining concepts of sustainable management are a source of significant cultural and economic strength and pride to Maori land owners.

Kaitiakitanga: A unique role in Sustainable Management

The concept of kaitiakitanga (stewardship/custodianship) is a fundamental Maori concept which once pervaded their total life cycle and connected them to the physical and spiritual world in which they existed. This concept links the supernatural and the everyday world of humans and all entities contained within. This concept is based on the Maori belief that all entities in the universe contain a "life force" (mauri) which predetermines their characteristics, attributes and values. Each of these entities forms various relationships or systems of relationships which have been observed and learnt through many centuries of human occupation. This has enabled Maori experts (tohunga) and the community generally, about how to apply rules and protocols of sustainable management necessary for the survival of their sources of food and life-sustaining products as well as maintaining the

ecosystems in which they exist. The existing cultural and spiritual knowledge systems associated with Kaitiakitanga are rich and deep. Maori assign kaitiaki (guardians) to all animate and inanimate, tangible and intangible, entities as well as the living and primeval systems in which they exist.

Maori tribes generally established themselves within particular geographic regions or localities within New Zealand. Over many centuries they compiled a vast and in-depth, empirical knowledge about their environment, all things contained within it, the effects of climate and movements of bird and marine species. They recorded these details and the effects of certain phenomenon in oral history and waiata (songs of different purpose) that were passed from one generation to another. A large body of knowledge of kaitiakitanga has since been retained by most Maori tribes and is still actively practiced.

An outstanding modern application of tribal Maori Kaitiakitanga may be illustrated from the examples of the Lake Taupo and Lake Rotoaira Forests Trusts located in the Central North Island of New Zealand. **(Refer to Appendix 1 - below)**

3.6 Significant capacity exists for the develop of exotic plantation forests on Maori Land

In 2006 Maori owned 1.5 million hectares of land (5.6% of the NZ land base). 29% was in pastoral farming; more than 50% was in indigenous and regenerating forests and scrublands, while over 12% was in exotic plantation forests (Māori Land Information Database (MLIB), NZLRI, and LCDB). Since the CNI Iwi Treaty Settlement a further 176,000 hectares of exotic forestry land has been added to Maori ownership. This and some other treaty settlements since 2006, takes the total plantation forests on Maori land to over 20%. This represents a huge capacity for Maori ownership of plantation forests once arrangements can be made to secure capital or arrange partnerships that will provide a stepped progress to ownership and control.

Regional estimates of Maori land with marginal productivity potential and suited to exotic plantation forests may be as high as 10-15% (200,000 hectares). Within the Tairāwhiti District, Gisborne–East Coast, Māori land accounts for 310 631 hectares, as at 1996 MLIB figures (Te Puni Kōkiri 1998, Durie 1998). It is estimated that up to 45,000 hectares of this Māori land could be eligible for plantation forests. Most of this land was previously farmed during the 1930s through to the 1960s but has since been allowed to revert to native vegetation (mainly scrubland) at various levels of progression.

The East Coast area faces significant erosion problems which would benefit from increased, well managed production forests. Given the declining viability of some pastoral activities, plantation forests could fulfil an important space in the sustainable productive use of Maori land. These sets of factors are repeated in many Maori, rural communities around New Zealand, including Northland, Central North Island, Whanganui and parts of the west coast of both North and South Islands.

This document has outlined the many reasons and underlying adversities facing Maori land owners who aspire to develop their land consistent with their core cultural values. These are conditions that are still subject to enquiries of social justice through Treaty claims and settlements. The fact that Maori landowners have not put the land into forestry by the specified date of 1994 or even by 2011 should not, they believe, preclude them from implementing such initiatives for plantation forests and being penalised against accreditation for FSC. Furthermore the statistics that are available from NZ Maori land holdings indicate that assigning an arbitrary limit of a 5% extension to the Forest Management Unit is unfair and impractical even if Maori land owners were able to secure an FMU to attach this extension.

As a matter of principle, Maori land owners believe that the FSC International Board should embrace and encourage the participation of indigenous peoples in the accreditation scheme for plantation forests particularly where they are managers of their own forests and are able to demonstrate outstanding examples of sustainable management. Maori owners are extremely concerned that if an exemption to Criteria 10.9.3 as outlined in this draft NZ Initiative is not accepted by the FSC Board, the opportunity for Maori plantation forest owners would be limited or diminished at a time when they are a significant emerging presence in the forestry industry in New Zealand.

3.7 Future Aspirations of Maori landowners

The primary asset of Maori – in general – is their lands, which have been handed down for centuries and to which they are intimately connected both spiritually and physically.

Consequently Maori are largely exposed to primary industries in New Zealand (the ‘three Fs’ of farming, forestry and fishing) and are likely to remain so for many generations to come. Improving the returns they are getting from these industries will provide a significant opportunity for Maori to get beyond the primary industry / commodity game, and Maori are now taking steps to achieve this. This increase in productivity will also obviously increase the economic position of New Zealand.

The desire of the owners is clearly to make these lands productive, but it has to be viable and it has to meet the cultural and spiritual objectives of the owners and provide an economic return to the owners. Ideally, plantation forestry provides a major opportunity for Maori owners to realise this aspiration.

Summary

The Maori chamber strongly advocates for Maori owned land, which was cleared for farming and other pastoral activity in recent history but which has since reverted back to a natural vegetative cover, be allowed to be cleared for afforestation and still be eligible for FSC certification.

There are many reasons for this as outlined above, but in summary they are that Maori are over-exposed to undeveloped and reverting lands. This paper highlights the many factors that have operated to prevent these lands from being established in forestry to date and show that they have been outside of the control of Maori land owners. Many Maori, nevertheless, still have aspirations to use more of their lands for plantation forestry, both for

wood production and now for carbon forestry, and consider that being able to get FSC certification is essential for the viability of such initiatives.

The fact that they had not put these lands – and in particular the reverting farmlands – into forestry to date has in no way been to circumvent any FSC regulations or to contravene the highest standards of preservation of indigenous forests in New Zealand. The reason is simple and clear, they have been the victims of a system of tenure and policy that has forced major impediments on their decisions to utilise their land in an equitable and practical manner. For this reason they should not be precluded from seeking FSC for future plantation forests in which they may be owners of or major stakeholders..

To stipulate a cut-off date for conversions of 1994 – at which time few Maori were and still are aware of FSC, and where they have never been in a position to influence, would simply impose another layer of injustice on Maori land owners. These Maori land owners already own large tracts of natural forest which they have no intention of ever converting. In New Zealand, plantation forests play a vital role in protecting natural forests, a fact highlighted by the statistics which indicate that only 1% of our wood fibre is sourced from native forests with the remaining 99% being sourced from sustainably managed plantation forests. The ability to seek FSC certification for future plantation forests established from conversions under the conditions stipulated in the draft Criteria 10.9.3 is critical to Maori land owners.

Appendix 1: Lake Taupo and Lake Rotoaira Forest Trusts

Forest Trust and the Lake Rotoaira Forest Trust – A model of Maori Self-Determination and Kaitiakitanga in Planted Forests in New Zealand.

The Lake Taupo and Lake Rotoaira Forest Trusts located in the Central North Island of New Zealand were, respectively, established in 1969 and 1972. The trusts represent the Maori land owners of the two estates. Together they encompass 49,000 hectares of Maori land and a total of 137 different land blocks in relatively close geographical proximity to each other. The venture partner is the government who provided the development capital and contracts the forest management.

A stumpage arrangement (rental based on value of relative inputs and annual profits) was entered into. The terms of both leases was originally for 70 years but this has since (2002) been reduced by 20 years by which time the trusts will become the 100% owner of the tree crop on the lands. In contemplation of this the trusts have commenced a replanting and management programme that is fully funded by a fund set aside from ongoing earnings from their share of stumpage.

1) Reasons for the development of Trust land for plantation forests

- a. Local authority pressure for alienation - In the 1960's the Maori land owners were desperate to arrest further land loss to local territorial, regulatory agencies who applied land taxes to undeveloped Maori land.
- b. The local authorities in cooperation with the government, planned to acquire large reserves adjacent to the iconic Lake Taupo while land was still zoned rural and relatively cheap.
- c. Maori opposed the local authority reserves and rating proposals.
- d. The owners were unable to raise development capital without a major joint venture partner. This partner was the Government of New Zealand.
- e. A planted forestry regime was chosen as the preferred land use instead of pastoral farming because it more appropriately met sustainability benchmarks – social, cultural, spiritual, environment and promised solid economic returns that would initially be shared with the Government in a strictly commercial arrangement with the Maori land owners eventually becoming the 100% owner of the plantation crop. Another reason for favoring exotic plantations was the intensive research investment that government had in both the plantation species and the development of local mills. An important consideration was the development of exotic plantation wood fibre as a future substitute for wood that was still being sourced from indigenous forests in New Zealand.

2) Enabling Factors

- a. Government development and management capital was critical to the venture. Crown support was incentivised by alignment of the benefits of the forestry enterprise with its large regional investments in hydro energy generation and the Central North Island mills.
- b. Traditional leadership was strong and credible to government and to the land owners. This was demonstrated in the decision of tens of thousands of owners to aggregate their 137 separate land blocks to form two legal forestry entities that encompassed over 49,000 hectares of land. It is noted that no venture similar to this in scale or nature has since been implemented in NZ.
- c. Land owner requests for exclusive rights of access for hunting, fishing, sacred and heritage areas and gathering wood and non-wood forest products was an important condition for owners and is implemented in the arrangements.

3) Kaitiakitanga

- a. Accommodating the concept of Kaitiakitanga in respect of Lake Taupo and Lake Rotoaira plantation forests in the late 1960's was a remarkable exercise on several counts. In normal circumstances the Maori land owners would normally have little control over the business on their lands once the Lessee took control.

In this example, the lessee and the Maori land owners mutually agreed to adopt innovative conditions to establish a model for sustainably managed plantation forests that was based on the Maori owners concept of kaitiakitanga

- b. Remarkable also is that this model was implemented at a period of time when local and regional territorial authorities were still standardizing rural land regulations and it is highly unlikely that they would have been effective in providing a comprehensive set of regulations to a landscape of this nature and scale and producing the spectacular outcomes for sustainable management that were achieved in this example. The successful application of a range of innovative concepts and mechanisms was the result of the Maori owners commitment to applying their in-depth tribal knowledge and combining this with conventional streams of expert knowledge developed within the plantation forest industry.
- c. Priority protection was given to important natural ecosystems, areas for riparian and soil conservation, sacred and heritage sites and landscapes and ecosystems of biological or environmental importance. Plantation forests also act as effective carbon sequesters and provide a land use option with reduced carbon and nitrate emissions.
- d. Leaders among the land owners insisted that no land preparation or planting of exotic species could commence until the areas for protection had been secured and made safe. This action resulted in 34% of the total land area for Lake Taupo Forest and 43% of Lake Rotoaira Forest being excluded from productive plantation forests. The value of the commitment of the owners to ensure compliance with their customary values is amplified when one considers the potential productive value foregone by the owners., enhance indigenous peoples connection to the land – antithesis of the negative global view
- e. This profound set of conditions is likely to exist while plantation forestry remains a viable business proposition. If this venture becomes financially marginal, there is a risk that land owners will want to exit their blocks from the forest estates and subject them to more productive uses. As plantation radiata forests is a generational venture, this decision may well rest on a future generation that may not have access to the knowledge of their predecessors or their strength of their conviction. In any case the value of global compliance mechanisms that recognise and support the strength of indigenous sustainable management processes and systems will be an important factor in determining this future decision.

4) Plantation Forests enhance Maori Self-Determination

- a. The plantation forests are a permanent sense of pride for the land owners and the tribe of Ngati Tuwharetoa.
- b. Since their inception they have provided a source of employment for the owners. Revenue has been available since 1986 for the elderly and in 1996

revenues have been available for owner distribution and a range of community and cultural grants for owners and their descendants. The latter include assistance for education, cultural enhancement programmes, health, marae (traditional meeting places), youth, funeral costs and rewards for outstanding individual achievement in the fields of sport, recreation, entertainment and education.

- c. The Trusts' enhanced financial capacity has enabled it to extend its business and influence on a number of fronts and in the advancement of key future opportunities for the owners and the tribe.
- d. In 2002 the trusts negotiated a variation to their leases. This had the effect of increasing their share of stumpage from the government and decreasing the period of time (by 20 years) that the government would remain in the Lease. Owners (through the trusts) are able to contract and pay for credible expertise and opportunities that were once beyond their reach. The trusts are currently initiating a joint exercise to explore value enhancement options in the total forestry industry.
- e. The present experience of the trusts and the owners is that these plantation forests enhance our economic and social strength and assist us to restore our tribal connection to the land and our cultural identity as Ngati Tuwharetoa.

George Asher

CEO: Lake Taupo Forest Trust

Trust Manager: Lake Rotoaira forest Trust
