



2 September 2021

To Our Fellow Mayors

At the last Rural Provincial meeting a discussion was initiated by Tracey Collis, Mayor of the Tararua District Council and Mayor of the Wairoa District Council, Craig Little around the increase of forestry planting throughout New Zealand and the impacts on communities.

This discussion resulted in a letter being sent by the two of us to Rural Provincial Councils regarding developing a collaborative approach to the impact of forestry plantings.

Please accept our apologies as this letter was not in fact sent out as advised.

As a result, a group of likeminded Councils committed to work collaboratively on the similar issues we are facing around increased planting of forestry and wanting to ensure future sustainable land use in their districts.

Following our initial discussion, more Councils have indicated they would like to be involved and it has become apparent there is a need to offer the opportunity to other likeminded Councils in New Zealand.

Councils are currently doing a lot of good work individually, but we need to work together for the greater good of future land use. Forming a collaborative group gives us a strong voice to present a high-level document that the Government can use moving forward.

We already have Councils that have committed to this approach, and the two of us recognised the need to begin the process and have made a financial commitment by engaging Lawrence Yule and Malcolm Alexander of Yule Alexander. By starting the necessary work now, we hope to have the study complete by the end of the year which will fit in with the timing of the Government's legislation. LGNZ has also committed funding to this project and will be a partner in this process.

Key points and topics we need to work on collaboratively are:

- That the National Environmental Standards for Plantation Forestry (NESPF) regulations override powers district councils have.
- The work promised by the government around NESPF (pre-election) regarding classes of land use has not been carried out
- The negative impact of forestry plantations on our rural communities



- The impact of forestry on the four wellbeing's – social, cultural, economic, and environmental
- We need to be able to compare our current rating models in relation to different land uses
- The effects of forestry on soil quality, especially after forestry rotations
- The short-sighted vision around planting land in trees with no long-term plan.
- The future of carbon farming, especially once the carbon has been absorbed - what will happen to the land and trees - who will be responsible for the payment of rates?
- The environmental damage caused by forestry blocks, eg: waterways and water quality, slash, silting and pollen, pest control, fire risk
- The damage caused to our roading network
- The fact the Overseas Investment Office streamlines processes which make it easy for overseas investors to buy land in New Zealand to plant in forestry
- Impacts to other industries
- Looking at Capital Valuation on Forestry, i.e. trees aren't included in capital valuation, where orchard's trees are part of their capital valuation

It is reassuring to know we can work collaboratively on these land use issues to lobby the government and hopefully make change.

The commencement of this work has already been started by Yule Alexander Consulting and is being presently funded through a contribution of \$5000 per Council paid by the Councils which have already committed to this collaborative approach.

The Wairoa District Council is collating the data base for Councils involved and will be responsible for the administration of this group. All Councils involved in this initiative will receive regular reporting on how the funds are being spent.

If you would like to be part of this work that is being carried out, please contact Makere Jones on 027 349 0861 or by return email with your details and we will issue an invoice.

Yours sincerely

Craig Little
Mayor Wairoa District Council

Tracey Collis
Mayor Tararua District Council