

Trees and our future

**LOVE OUR FORESTS
OUR CLIMATE DOES**



CO₂

What trees can do for you

Planting hill country in trees gives a higher return than sheep and beef. Over the past 30 years, on average, per hectare, per year, growing and harvesting trees has brought landowners higher returns than farming sheep and beef.

Carbon credits bring additional income. They are paid by emitters, not the taxpayer, and designed as an incentive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Forestry is a big industry with both large and small scale producers. New Zealand forest product export returns currently match the value of sheepmeat and beef exports. 40% of the log harvest is processed here in New Zealand.

Landowners have rights

It is the right of a landowner to enjoy and use their land in any way they think fit or to change land use.

That right has always been limited by obligations to neighbours to not cause a nuisance, and by central or local government policies which say communities have greater rights than individuals in those communities.

But those community rights should not extend to telling a landowner that they cannot plant production woodlots over any or all of their farm, or to prevent a sale to someone else who will plant forests or for that matter grow grapes or avocados on the land.

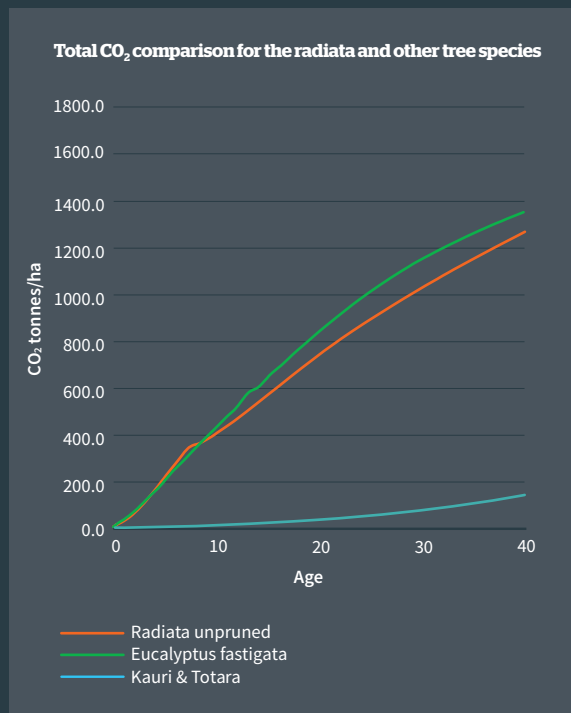
There are many sound economic, environmental, employment, climate change and social reasons why afforestation should be encouraged and not opposed in our regions.



Forest myths

There are a few myths about the place of forestry which need to be put right;

- The world will not starve if we export a bit less elite food (or wool for that matter). Even our huge dairy industry only produces 3% of the world total.
- Forests, either planted or indigenous, hold steep land better than pasture. Recent RMA regulations now effectively prevent afforestation on the more vulnerable soils and slopes. That reduces the risk for everyone downstream.
- Pine trees are excellent for carbon lock-up. Indigenous trees take up carbon much more slowly.

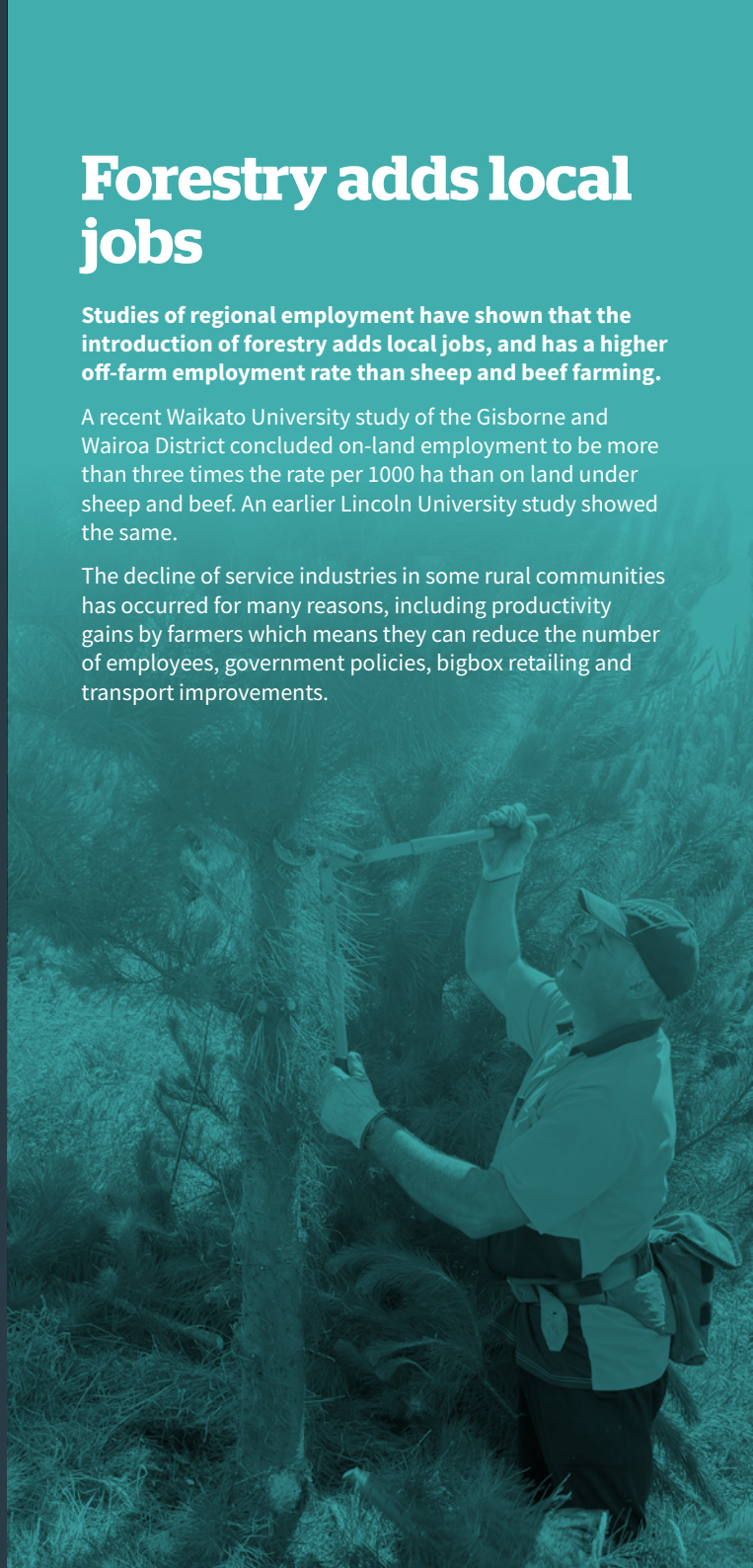


Forestry adds local jobs

Studies of regional employment have shown that the introduction of forestry adds local jobs, and has a higher off-farm employment rate than sheep and beef farming.

A recent Waikato University study of the Gisborne and Wairoa District concluded on-land employment to be more than three times the rate per 1000 ha than on land under sheep and beef. An earlier Lincoln University study showed the same.

The decline of service industries in some rural communities has occurred for many reasons, including productivity gains by farmers which means they can reduce the number of employees, government policies, bigbox retailing and transport improvements.





LOVE OUR FORESTS
OUR ENVIRONMENT DOES



0.3 tonnes per yr CO₂-e



2.7 tonnes per yr CO₂-e



9 tonnes per yr CO₂-e

A single 20 year old *Pinus radiata* will offset all the greenhouse gas through the life of 1 sheep.
1.5 trees will offset 1 cow's gas for one year. 5 trees will offset the carbon from 1 car for 1 year.

Climate change is real

Urgent action is required to achieve Carbon Zero by 2050.

The debate on climate change is no longer whether it is happening – but how fast. The threat is now seen as an emergency. Some scenarios are predicting it will be too hot to survive in large parts of the world, and the sea level will rise by many metres, well within our lifetimes.

New Zealand farming leads the world in reducing its greenhouse gas output. This is quite an achievement – but it is not enough.

Even with a widescale and rapid shift to an electric vehicle fleet, the reduction in greenhouse gas output will not be enough.

Trees are the only way to offset our greenhouse gas emissions enough to reach our 2030 Paris Commitment, which requires a 30% reduction in net emissions within a decade.

But planting up areas of our hill country in exotic and harvestable trees, will give us enough time to transform into a genuine and sustainable low carbon economy well before the end of the century.

How we can work together

As with any large scale transition there will be disruption caused in some regions as land use changes, be it to dairy or to planted forests.

Government needs to assist rural communities to transition to a zero carbon economy. It needs to provide training for young people to work in silviculture and forest harvesting, by helping councils with rural roading and infrastructure development, and by research and development into alternatives to fossil fuels.

Forestry will not replace hill country farming in New Zealand. That is neither imaginable nor desirable.

Foresters can work together with farmers to get better government policy. Pine trees can be modified to be sterile and not cause wildings, while grasses can be changed with the same technology to cause less methane.

Only by working together can we meet the challenge.