



SUBMISSION ON THE PERMANENT FOREST SINK INITIATIVE

New Zealand Forest Owners Association Inc

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Background

1. The New Zealand Forest Owners Association (FOA) is the representative membership body for the commercial plantation forest growing industry.
2. FOA members are responsible for the management of approximately 1.2 million hectares of New Zealand's plantation forests and over 80% of the annual harvest.
3. FOA is submitting on behalf of its membership.

Submission

After careful consideration of the document, the FOA:

4. Acknowledges the considerable environmental benefits and ecosystem services that forests provide.
5. Does not consider that the Permanent Forest Sink Initiative (PFSI) provides the necessary encouragement, stability or economic incentives to successfully encourage afforestation in the long term.
6. Considers that the PFSI is a subsidy and although it is designed to create positive outcomes, using a subsidy regime to encourage good behaviour is likely to result in low uptake.
7. Believes that the conversion of marginal pasture land to alternative economically viable and environmentally sustainable uses is the responsibility of the land owner, not necessarily the tax payer. The PFSI and its intent suggests that land owners either do not understand or do not accept their responsibility as stewards of the environment.
8. Considers that education and assistance for identifying alternative land uses for marginal pasture that would benefit the environment and the land owner would be more advantageous.
9. Believes that the PFSI has resulted in very little success – only 61 participants contributing 15,900 hectares since 2006 – when taking into account the considerable budget connected with the scheme.



Conclusion

10. Suggests that a more thorough review of the scheme and its aims is undertaken to ensure that this initiative is the best use of financial resources for obtaining the outcomes in question.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit on this matter.

Yours sincerely



Brigid Jenkins
Analyst
On behalf of the Forest Owners Association

