

EDITORIAL

Totara in the Spotlight

Survey of existing uses and market potential of regenerated 'farm-totara' – encouraging results out!

The Northland Totara Working Group has completed a survey project about the uses and market potential of regenerated 'farm-totara' timber and the results are all very encouraging! The results provide clear support to promote the use of this timber and the development of a sustainable commercial industry around this emerging regional resource. There were also positive indications for the future of native timber generally. Success with regenerating totara may help pave the way for other native timber species in the future.

The survey involved over 54 participants across 7 different key stakeholders groups, including land-owners, saw-millers and timber merchants, builders, cabinet-makers, craftsmen and wood processors, architects and designers, wood-quality scientists and carvers of totara for cultural use. It found that the timber from relatively young naturally regenerated totara trees off farmland has been widely used. It is considered to be an excellent native softwood timber, relatively easy to mill, dry, work and finish, and is considered to be suitable for all interior uses, particularly feature linings, joinery and furniture.

This survey project has captured a lot of extremely valuable practical knowledge and experience and expert opinion about the use and market potential of 'farm-totara'. In-depth interviews covered a wide range of topics from felling, harvesting, milling, drying, working, gluing, finishing, uses, potential markets, stumpage and sawn-lumber prices, legal issues, and perceptions around using native timber generally. The full project report is available from the TTT website:

www.tanestrees.org.nz

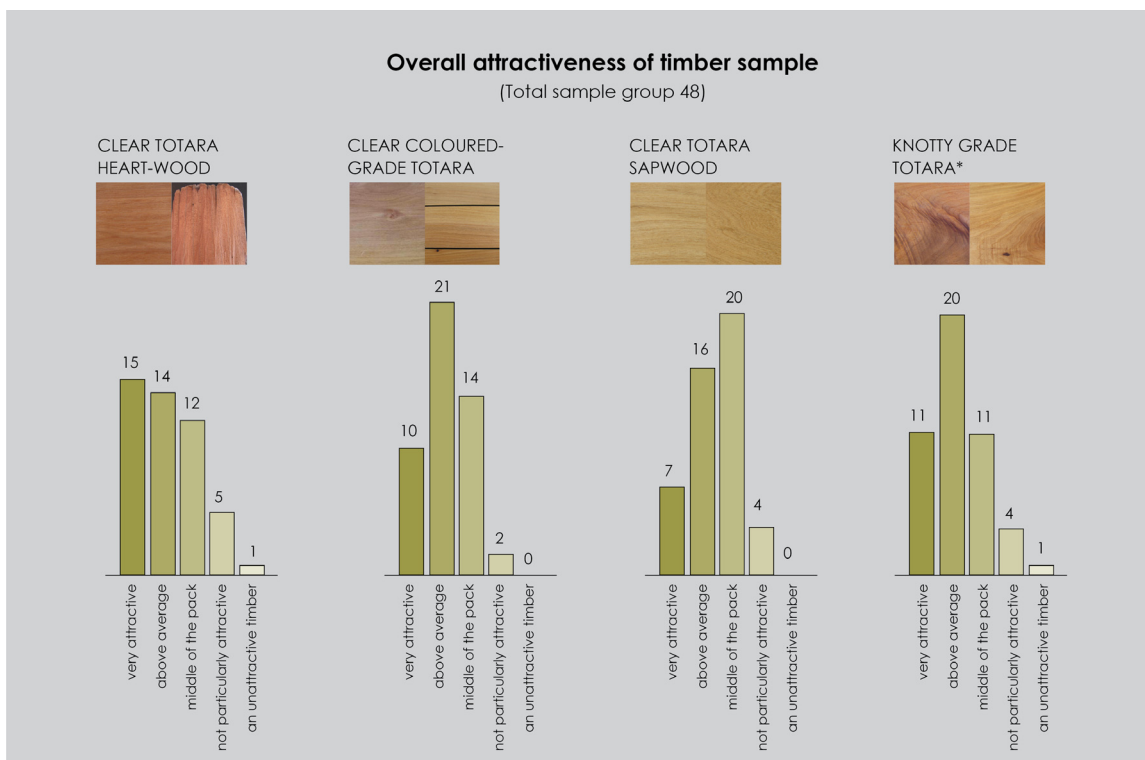
Potential from young trees

One particularly significant finding relates to the market appeal and interest in the lighter coloured sapwood. The resource comprises relatively young regenerated trees that have not received any silvicultural management (such as thinning or pruning). Consequently the timber comprises mostly sapwood or 'coloured' timber grades rather than the 'clear-heartwood' grade that was traditionally used. It also has a high proportion of knotty-grade timber. However the results of Question 50 show that all grades of totara timber, including the lighter coloured and knotty grades, rated well for appearance and attractiveness. In fact many architects expressed a clear preference for the lighter coloured clear-sapwood grade sample. This is a fortuitous result given the nature of the resource, and may also have implications for other planted native timber species such as kauri, where shorter rotation lengths are unlikely to yield timber with significant heartwood content.

Workshop and "where to from here?"

Last month Paul Quinlan presented the results of the project at a joint Tāne's Tree Trust and NTWG public workshop in Northland. Overall the results of the survey clearly show that all stakeholder groups consider farm-totara has very good market potential and that they support the initiatives of the Northland Totara Working Group to promote its use. The obvious question is: "where to from here?" This was discussed at the workshop. Dean Satchell from NZ Farm Forestry Ass. (NZFFA)

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* 'Feature grade' (boards that included partially or fully intergrown knots). This included a wide board with a combination of knots and sizes that exceeded the specification of "Dressing" appearance grade as specified in NZS 3631: 1988 New Zealand Timber Grading Rules (For Native Softwoods).



A good example of compression grain.

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suggested some logical timber strength and durability testing be undertaken. Collaboration with NZFFA is possible in these matters and will be pursued. The creation of online timber trading – another NZFFA project presently underway – will also bring new opportunities. However as far as strategic directions or bigger projects for the NTWG going forward, no clear plan emerged. This matter still occupies our minds.

This survey project has built on, and complements, the previous work and projects completed by the Northland Totara Working Group. These include an inventory project by Chris Kennedy which demonstrated that a significant resource of naturally regenerating totara exists in Northland, and extensive silviculture trials by Scion scientist David Bergin, that showed excellent potential for sustainable management and that growth rates can be greatly boosted through thinning and pruning (suggesting an important role for silvicultural management of the emerging resource).

The NTWG has had good momentum from these successful projects. They have perhaps now brought things near the cusp of the logical next step – more pro-active industry development. However, the group is now at a difficult stage of needing to redefine its role and future. The recent project indicates that somehow addressing the issue of continuity of a commercial-scale supply is the most critical area to focus upon. This suggests the need to co-ordinate the collective resource and its future management.

– Paul Quinlan
pdq@podocarpus.co.nz

For further information on the Northern Totara Working Group, contact

**John Hampson Regional Co-ordinator (Northland)
 NZ Landcare Trust. Ph (09) 430 0954**

STUDY TOUR 2012

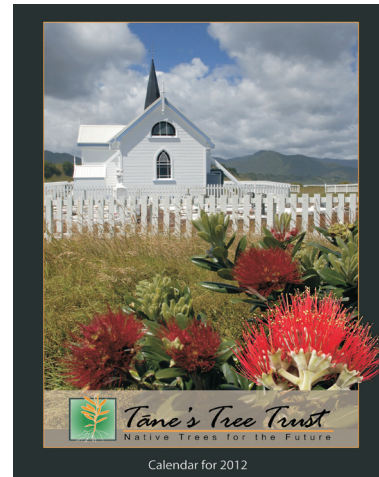
EUROPEAN SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY

This study tour led by TTT trustee Mark Dean will now take place in September 2012. The fully guided tour will visit Germany, Italy, Scotland and England, visiting areas where sustainable forest management has been practised for centuries in some cases. Mark Dean is organising the itinerary and House of Travel are managing the travel. Mark would like expressions of interest for the trip next year and suggests this is a very good way to spend your SKI money.

Please contact Mark Dean at
mark@naturallynative.co.nz

or telephone him at 07 543 1494 or 021 942 339

2012 CALENDAR



Soon to be hot off the press (end of September), we are proud to deliver the Tāne's Tree Trust 2012 calendar. Twelve gorgeous pictures together with informative text, the calendars will make impressive overseas gifts and stocking fillers. \$20.00 plus \$3.50 p&p.

THE TECHNICAL HANDBOOK

PLANTING AND MANAGING NATIVE TREES VOL 1

Due to demand, a second print run of the Tāne's Tree Trust Technical Handbook is currently underway. The handbook is a comprehensive reference guide that can be updated regularly in order to disseminate information about best-practice methods for the establishment and management of indigenous plantations. The project is managed by Tāne's Tree Trust with funding and support from FITEC (Forest Industry Training and Education Council), the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Sustainable Farming Fund, Tāne's Tree Trust, Scion and Future Forests Research.



\$35.00 members or \$55.00 non-members
 plus \$3.50 p&p

To order please use one of the contact methods listed in the "In Touch" section of this newsletter.

Excerpts from Chairman's Report

Trustees for 2011/2012

Ian Barton	Ian Campbell	Murray McAlonan
Peter Berg	Andrew McEwen	Rob Storey
Roger MacGibbon	David Bergin	Andrew Caddie
Helmut Janssen	Robert McGowan	Mark Dean
Warwick Silvester		

Membership

The number of members remains at a similar level as the previous year – some 280 people or groups.

As this newsletter goes to print, 209 out of 280 members have sent us their annual subscriptions. On top of the basic subscription rate the trust has received \$2730.00 in donations which are set aside for dedicated research funding. Once again an enormous thank you to everyone for their continued support of the work of the trust. We couldn't do it without you!

Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan set 22 targets to be achieved over the three year period 2010 - 2013. At March 2011 18% of the targets had been achieved, 54% were underway, 9% are stalled and 27% had not started. As this is only the first year of the three year period the results are quite good with 72% achieved or underway.

Indigenous Forest Research

The Trust works with Future Forests Research (CEO Russell Dale) which is responsible for determining the research programme of Scion to maximize available funding. Our emphasis is to work with them to ensure that indigenous forestry is adequately recognized, although we are still disappointed at the meagre amount of funding which does go to indigenous forestry. Part of this is due to the decisions made at the previous funding round. The next round is in 2013 and we will make strong representations to FFR to have the amount for indigenous research increased.

Ian Barton
18 August 2011

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Highlights of the Annual General Meeting

held at NZ Dairy Conference Room at
59 Jordan Valley Road, Hikurangi, on 21 August 2011

The AGM was held in conjunction with the Northern Totara Working Group workshop, which heard from Paul Quinlan the results of the survey which is detailed in the Editorial. The chairman and others reiterated our support for the work of the NTWG and in discussion indicated that this project has been a very successful one for both TTT and NTWG. The discussion on the outcomes of the survey gave encouragement to the group to look for ways to further its work and indicated ongoing support from TTT.

Other matters discussed were the two main ongoing projects on identifying native plantations and the Lake Taupo plantings (see elsewhere in the newsletter).

With a number of projects coming to a close the AGM was alerted to the need to generate a project list and the wider membership is requested to have input into this.

TTT finances are in a healthy condition and it was agreed to leave the subscription level at its present level. Members are invited to look at the AGM minutes on the web site.

West Coast Workshop May 27-29 2011

The Trust has long wanted to hold a workshop in Westland and it finally happened in late May. Ian Barton, Mark Smale and Helmut Janssen joined up with our very efficient host, Michael Orchard, and up to 40 Coasters for a very informative and enjoyable long weekend.

On the Friday evening we did a formal presentation in Greymouth. Ian outlined the work of the Trust and spoke about site selection, Helmut dealt with planting and silviculture and Mark presented an overview of the beech bulletin which he has almost completed writing.

On Saturday we drove north toward Reefton, stopping at Ken Ferguson's to see various aspects of beech management (mostly red). The Ferguson farm has a good range of forestry activities but Ken feels beech still doesn't bring in a big enough return. The group also looked at planting to restore a wildlife corridor and had a talk from a nurseryman who specializes in growing plants for restoration work – mainly of gold & coal mines. We visited NZ Sustainable Forest Products Mill, just north of Reefton, which is managed by Jon Dronfield. Apart from sawn timber they also produce sliced red and silver beech – a most interesting operation producing some stunningly attractive veneer. The sliced veneer is worth about \$9000 per m3 but unfortunately only a small percentage of the harvest is good enough for slicing. Jon said we can make good money out of beech by adding as much value as possible.

On Sunday we drove to Maruia Valley to look at Jon's mainly red beech thinning trials – some interesting work. Jon has good connections with private owners. At a nearby home we saw a wide range of timbers, native and exotic, in a new house. Then to the old NZ Forest Service silver beech trials at Perseverance and Larry's creeks. Interesting but a bit depressing, as form and growth appear to be poor – probably a soil issue. After looking at beech trials for two days I have concluded that kauri is a more straightforward species, easier to understand and with less wood quality problems (but then I am biased.) Of the beeches Red appears to have more potential than the others because it is a more straightforward species to work with.

Ian Barton

IN TOUCH

We would like to capture a few more of our members' details. This is to enable us to become more effective and efficient in our communication with you.

If you have received this newsletter by post but would prefer to receive it electronically, please email office@tanestrees.org.nz with your address. For those members who have opted to receive the newsletter to their in box, future subscription invoices and donation receipts will also be sent electronically. If you would prefer the postal option instead please let us know.

We would appreciate any feedback, comments, suggestions about the work of the trust, funding/sponsorship opportunities, how we operate, newsletter contributions, website function or any other aspect of Tāne's Tree Trust.

Speaking of websites, if you haven't already done so, please visit www.tanestrees.org.nz. Other than this quarterly newsletter, our website is the first port of call to get up to date information about projects, publications and workshop proceedings. You will also find information about new workshops and can view Tāne's Tree Trust's Plantation and Indigenous Forestry Archive databases.

CONTACT DETAILS

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PROJECT UPDATES

Indigenous Tree Bulletin – The Beeches

Production of the 6th bulletin in the Scion Indigenous Tree Bulletin series entitled 'The beeches – ecology, establishment, growth and management' is also in its final stages with most peer-reviewed comments received and actioned. The bulletin covers all the beech species with some emphasis on timber production. This is a collaborative project undertaken by Landcare Research and Scion with funding from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Sustainable Farming Fund, and the Diverse Species Programme at Scion via Futura Forests Research. In-kind support has been received from the NZ Institute of Forestry and the NZ Farm Forestry Association.

Publication of the beech bulletin has been delayed due to rescheduling Expanding the Market for Sustainably Managed Indigenous (Southern) Beech Forests and Industry Workshop, to be held in Christchurch on Tuesday 25th October 2011 (contact jeanette.allen@canterbury.ac.nz for more information). It has been recommended that information from this workshop is included in the bulletin so Mark Smale, the main author of the bulletin, will be attending in order to provide an update of latest research and marketing on managed beech.

National survey of indigenous plantations for carbon accounting

The Tāne's Tree Trust (TTT) nationwide survey of significant plantings of native trees and shrubs is nearing completion. The project has been funded for the last three years by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's Sustainable Farming Fund and TTT with support from Scion's Diverse Species Programme funded by the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology through Future Forests Research. Growth data and management history from over 100 planted stands of natives has been collated and four Technical Articles are being prepared for the TTT Handbook including:

1. Scope and extent of the TTT survey of planted indigenous stands;
2. Growth of the key indigenous conifer tree species;
3. Growth of indigenous hardwood trees and shrubs;
4. Implications for carbon accounting for planted indigenous stands.

These articles will be published before the end of the year.

Kauri Thinning Trial

This trial proposes to thin selected parts of a block which was originally planted with kauri beside the Mangatangi River in the southern Hunua Ranges in the mid 1970s to test various fertilizers, seedling sizes etc. The kauri grew well, some plots now having high stand density with reduced growth rates. The trial will be established in spring 2011 with two plots thinned to determine the growth response of residual trees, relative to trees in unthinned plots, and for how long the increased growth will continue. Kauri's potential for continuous cover management will also be assessed by using CCF principles during thinning – leaving a range of tree sizes, the objective being to induce kauri regeneration from seed shed by adjacent trees. If successful this will considerably reduce the costs of growing future kauri forests. Timber samples from felled trees will be taken to Scion to be analysed separately, via Future Forests Research, for density, strength and carbon sequestration properties.

To date only two kauri plantations in New Zealand have been thinned – both in the Taranaki region. It is important to establish further thinning trials within the natural range of the species, in order to further quantify the response to thinning of plantation grown kauri and identify the potential to manage the species for timber production. The trees in this trial have been measured since planting so a full picture of early growth and response to thinning will be obtained.

There are two thinned plots, each 400 m² (1/25th ha) with thinned surrounds; one will be on a flat, moister site with larger trees and the other on the adjacent slope where soil conditions are drier and the trees smaller. Smaller plots at each site will be unthinned controls. The current stocking is about 5000 stems per ha. – equivalent to an overstocked natural pole stand.

Once established and measured, the plots will be re-measured on a two year cycle for at least ten years or until growth increment slows; measurements will then be done every five years. Regeneration of kauri and other indigenous species, following thinning, will also be recorded. Plot data will be entered onto the Scion Permanent Sample Plot register, and will be programmed for regular re-measurement. Data from the plots will also be placed on the Trust's database (available on the Trust website), www.tanestrees.org.nz

Indigenous planting trials, Lake Taupo

The third year of this project is underway with 2400 indigenous tree and shrub species to be planted at the main trial site within the Lake Taupo catchment at Waihaha, western Taupo. The project, funded by the Lake Taupo Protection Trust, aims to provide practical guidelines for establishing a range of indigenous tree and shrub species on land retired from pastoral grazing or exotic production forestry within the Lake Taupo catchment. A specific objective is to reduce the cost of raising and establishing indigenous plants for large scale planting programmes.

The trial this year involves exploring several initiatives including comparing low site preparation and maintenance options for establishing indigenous trees and shrubs and comparing the performance of nursery-raised plants raised in PB planter bags, root trainers, and as open-ground transplants. Low input weed control may be a feasible option on recently retired hill country that is relatively free of invasive weeds.

A further component is evaluating the role of wilding or planted pine may have in providing early shelter as a temporary nurse crop in assisting and reducing the costs of establishing indigenous species.

And the winner is...

...Mark Dean, a Trustee of Tāne's Tree Trust has won the prestigious Loder Cup for 2011. This is NZ's highest conservation honour given out by the Minister of Conservation. The Loder Cup is awarded each year to acknowledge outstanding achievements in flora conservation.

Congratulations Mark from everyone involved with Tāne's Tree Trust. Further details on Mark's achievements can be found by googling : Loder Cup 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS

Trees On Farms Workshop at Gisborne on 17 November 2011. Venue TBA

This is the first in a series of 26 regional workshops organised through the NZ Farm Forestry Association branches in association with Tāne's Tree Trust. The workshops will focus on key issues for farmers associated with using native trees within a farm landscape.

For more information on the Gisborne workshop and the workshop series please email Ian Barton. ibtrees@wc.net.nz

International Year of The Forest Taupo, Venue TBA

To celebrate the year of the forest, TTT is holding a workshop in Taupo later this year. This workshop will highlight the work the trust is doing in the Lake Taupo catchment with funding from LTPT (Lake Taupo Protection Trust.) TTT led by Roger MacGibbon and David Bergin has established planting trials of container and open grown (bare rooted) native tree and shrub species within the lake catchment and these will be showcased at the workshop.

To book please use one of the contact methods listed in "In Touch" panel on page 3..