

The Institute of Foresters of Australia Inc.

(W.A. DIVISION)

22 NOV 1983
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C/- Clunies Ross,
Memorial Foundation,
P.O. Box 123,
NEDLANDS, W.A., 6009.

Chairman: R. Underwood.

Committee: B. White.
J. Williamson
J. Bradshaw.

Hon. Secretary: J. Kaye.

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1983

1. Shannon Basin and Softwood Policy

- 1 On the invitation of the Manjimup Shire the Institute of Foresters presented its position on the recent Government decisions regarding the Shannon Basin and the Softwood Policy to establish pines in the Manjimup area. These views were presented at a public meeting on the 13th of October, 1983. The meeting was attended by the Premier and Minister for Forests Mr Burke. The views of the Primary Industry Association, Conservation Council W.A., Forests Products Association W.A., and the W.A. Timber Industry Industrial Union of Workers were also represented.

A copy of the Institute Statement on these issues is enclosed.* Thanks to the Southern Branch members for their part in preparing the statements.

2. South Coast National Park Advisory Committee

The Committee wrote to the Premier requesting the Institute be represented on the South Coast National Park Advisory Committee.

The Institute thought that since the initial proposal for a South Coast National Park was made by the Institute that it had claim to a position on the Advisory Committee. This request was not accepted, however the Advisory Committee will be interested in any comments the Institute can offer on the Draft Management Plan.

3. Biennial I.F.A. Conference Melbourne September, 1983

a) The Biennial Conference in Melbourne was attended by our outgoing Chairman, Don Spriggins. Don presented a paper on "Future Direction for the Forestry Profession". (Copies can be obtained from Roger Underwood).

b) Membership: As at 8/8/83 the total membership stood at 1,415 made up as follows:-

Honorary	- 2	Associates	- 158
Fellows	- 41	Student	- 137
Members	- 1077		

If you know of any person keen to join the Institute let me know (Associate or Corporate).

c) Policy Statements: Significant progress was made with production and development of Institute Policies. Statements finalised were:-

- 1) Conservation Through Reserves
- 2) Rainforests

Policy statements under consideration are:-

- 1) Conifer Planting (Revision S.A.Division)
- 2) Utilization of low quality wood material in native forests (W.A. Division).

d) Next Biennial Conference - 50th Anniversary: After Melbourne, conferences will be held biennially instead of triennially. The 1985 Tasman Conference will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Institute.

* Manjimup members should already have a copy of the Shannon Basin Statement.

4. STUDY TOUR TO ESPERANCE, 22, 23 OCTOBER 1983

To get the true feeling of Esperance it is necessary first to see the offshore islands of the Recherche Archipelago at close quarters. This we did on the Saturday of our "Forests in Agriculture" study tour, noting such multiple use values as the animals (a bull sea lion and two pups, many dolphins), the birds (albatross, mutton birds, seagulls and hang gliders), and the fish (pink schnapper, sweep, blue groper, nannygai, sergeant baker and other delicious reef fish). Alec Hart, Bob Towers and John Wiederman saw the fish at closer quarters than the others, and showed how foresters of whatever physique can quickly change into burley fishermen.

On the second day there was a wealth of interest and hospitality on 3 farms within 80 km of Esperance. Items of interest included several kinds of hardwood and softwood windbreaks, salt scald rehabilitation planting, farm treated fenceposts from home grown pinaster, and some overmature pinaster from very early plantings. Alan Herbert, the OIC of the Agriculture Department at Esperance kindly explained to us the characteristics of farming in the Esperance area, with its 300-550mm rainfall.

The focus of the visit was Helms arboretum 18 km north of Esperance. The name commemorates the late Andy Helms a forester known to many students at the Australian Forestry School up to 1958. In his early days he was manager of Esperance Pine Forests Limited when planting began in 1928. His observations and trials ensured that attention was directed to nutrition work and enabled later agricultural and forestry activities to be successfully developed on the Esperance plains.

Planting in the arboretum began in 1973. There are over 80 species now, mostly in ½ hectare blocks, which is large enough to give a good impression of their growth. In addition to the arboretum, about 200 hectares of pinaster have been planted between 1956 and 1969.

Thanks are due to Peter Richmond for arranging the itinerary and contacts in Esperance and to Jim Edwards for the original idea, the overall organizing and the boating contacts.

(Editor's note: This was the fifth official overnight IFA (WA division) study tour. The previous four have been to Mt. Gibson station (1982), the Kimberley's and Northern Territory (1979), Millstream and the Pilbara (1976), and Kalgoorlie (1972).

Jim Williamson.

5. Agricultural Land Release

The Committee (I.F.A.) has made a submission to the Agricultural Land Release Committee.

Five Points were made:-

- a) The present system has been a failure in many areas.
- b) There should be an E.R.M.P. for any major change in land use.
- c) Proposals should be made available for public scrutiny and comment.
- d) Management regimes should be specified.
- e) Improvement to management of current agricultural land is more pressing than the need for more land releases.

6. Future Newsletters

Members are invited to contribute to this newsletter. Please let me know if you have any newsworthy items.

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J. KAYE *JK*

SECRETARY

The Institute of Foresters of Australia

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22 NOV 1983

STATEMENT ON RESERVATION OF THE
SHANNON BASIN AND MAINTENANCE OF
RESOURCE TO THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

OCTOBER 1983

STATEMENT ON RESERVATION OF THE SHANNON BASIN AND
THE MAINTENANCE OF RESOURCE TO THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

by THE INSTITUTE OF FORESTERS OF AUSTRALIA (W.A. DIVISION)

OCTOBER 1983

WHAT IS THE INSTITUTE OF FORESTERS?

The Institute of Foresters of Australia is an association of professional foresters in Australia. It was established in 1935 with the objective of advancing the cause of forestry, and to promote the sound management of Australian forests. It has a membership of over 1500 graduate foresters or graduates of other scientific disciplines working professionally in forestry. Most members are employed directly in land management in the various Forest and National Park Services. Others are employed in industry, research agencies and tertiary institutions.

Foresters have worked in W.A. since 1919. During this time they have had a major influence in the southwest. One of their greatest achievements was the securing and reservation of forest land. It is largely due to W.A.'s professional foresters that State Forests exist at all, and are today in a condition worthy of consideration as National Parks.

The Institute of Foresters believes that sound management of forests is vital for conservation, for the maintenance of natural processes, the provision of material needs such as timber, for the protection of water supplies, and for recreation. Forestry is a multi-disciplinary science. Foresters have wide practical forest management experience. Therefore, we feel we have a role to play in providing sound professional opinion on forestry issues.

In recent times the Institute has drawn attention to the consequences of bauxite mining in the jarrah forest and was the original proposer of a South Coast National Park in 1972 - a proposal commended by the Australian Conservation Foundation, and later accepted by the Conservation Through Reserves Committee, the

Environmental Protection Authority and governments of both political parties. When declared this will become the largest and most diverse National Park in the South West.

It is in this context that we offer our views on the Shannon Basin and Manjimup pine forest proposals.

THE VIEW OF THE INSTITUTE ON LAND USE MANAGEMENT

The Institute of Foresters believes in the following principles:-

1. There should be proper land use authorities (statutory bodies) to recommend to governments upon land use. This includes recommendations on conservation reserves.

Recommendations on conservation reserves should be based on sound data on the occurrence of natural communities, their distribution in relation to land tenure and their conservation status. In every land use decision, account should be taken of all relevant scientific, social and economic factors.

2. Land use should be based on the purpose for which land is best suited in the long term interests of the nation.
3. Forests should be managed to meet as far as is practicable the various and varying needs of the whole community, not simply those of special interest groups or industry.
4. Governments have a responsibility to ensure sound management of all public lands. This requires adequate funding for research, planning and administration.
5. Public lands should be managed according to the provisions of formal management plans, and governments should provide resources to ensure these are prepared.

Many public reserves are inadequately managed. More funds and people are needed to manage existing reserves properly, let alone to manage new reserves which may be created.

6. Management plans must provide for fire management. In the south west of W.A., no long term management is possible without comprehensive fire management policies and practices. These need to be integrated with those of surrounding forested land and private property.
7. Government policies which affect forest industries should ensure that the communities' needs for timber are met, and are supplied efficiently.

Wherever possible, West Australians should have enough timber for their needs, at reasonable cost.

In summary then, the Institute of Foresters considers that land should be managed for its best long term use, as recommended by a land use body using sound data, and that management aims and policies should be spelt out in formal management plans.

THE SHANNON BASIN ISSUE

The Institute of Foresters has adopted a consistent stance with respect to proposals to "preserve" the Shannon since they were first mooted. This is summarized as follows:-

1. It is the prerogative of elected governments to make land use decisions. But these decisions should be made on the basis of recommendations of land use authorities, and should take into account long term consequences. Long term consequences are especially important with respect to decisions about forests, because such long time scales are involved.
2. The Institute of Foresters notes that the following views were expressed by an independent consultant Dr Peter Attiwell to the W.A. Environmental Protection Authority in September 1982.
 - (i) that the (then) Government's policy of multiple-use priorities in the karri forest was in accord with the conservation ethic of greatest sustainable benefit of all of the values of the forest;

- (ii) that the karri forest reserve system then proposed (i.e., without the Shannon) was biologically adequate; and
 - (iii) that there was no evidence that past management practices in the karri forest had caused any deterioration in the diversity of flora and fauna, or a deterioration in productivity of the ecosystem.
3. The Institute believes that the Shannon Basin cannot be considered in isolation, but only in relation to the entire karri forest.

If the Shannon is set aside in a reserve and the level of logging is not reduced to allow for this and existing reserves elsewhere are maintained there must be several long term consequences on the remainder of the forest:

- . The level of fire protection will decline and become more expensive. Fire control will become more difficult.
- . The long term availability of karri timber (for local industry and for the consumer) will decline by 20%.
- . Recent trends to reduce overcutting will be reversed.
- . The value of the remaining karri forest for other uses (for example: recreation) will be reduced.

A pine planting programme in the region can compensate for loss of timber production, but not for the other consequences listed, especially karri overcutting and regional fire protection.

4. It is the view of the Institute of Foresters that there are two options in this issue which are consistent with proper long term management of the karri forest:-

EITHER:

- (i) Reservation of the Shannon plus a commensurate reduction in the level of the annual cut from the forest;

OR:

- (ii) Maintenance of the cut, with no reservation of the Shannon but with adoption of the conservation reserve system endorsed by the E.P.A.

The Institute believes that alternative options (such as reservation of the Shannon plus maintenance of the cut, or cutting existing conservation reserves) are not consistent with proper long term management of the karri forest.

THE PROPOSED PINE FOREST PROGRAMME FOR MANJIMUP

The Institute of Foresters believes that:-

1. Land should be used for the purpose to which it is best suited in the long term. A great deal of land in the Manjimup region is at least as well suited for forestry as it is for many other uses.
2. Wherever practicable new pine forests should be established on non-productive agricultural land, so long as the soils are suitable.
3. There should be consultation at all levels in planning and implementing pine forest programmes. Community consultation is essential before major land use decisions are made.

The Institute would therefore support the establishment of new pine forests on land less suited for alternative uses in the Manjimup region. However, we believe that this should only be done following full public consultation and after the opportunity has been provided to inspect detailed proposals.

Finally, the Institute of Foresters believes that because of the links between the two issues, a decision on the Shannon and the management of the karri forest should be deferred until the feasibility of the pine planting scheme has been demonstrated.

REFERENCES

The views expressed in this paper are based upon:-

1. The Institute of Foresters' National Forest Policy.
2. The Institute of Foresters' Policy on Conservation Through Reserves.
3. The Institute of Foresters' Policy on Conifer Planting.

Copies of these statements can be obtained by writing to
The Secretary, I.F.A. C/- Ian Clunies Ross Foundation, P.O.
Box 123 Nedlands W.A.