

## Forestry Ministerial Advisory Group: Terms of Reference

### The Group's Role

1. The Forestry Ministerial Advisory Group (the “Advisory Group”) has been convened by the Minister of Forestry, to provide the Minister with industry perspective and independent advice on matters agreed between the Minister and the Chair of the Advisory Group. A particular initial focus will be on advice relating to the Government’s *One Billion Trees programme*.
2. The Advisory Group will provide advice to the Minister of Forestry and Te Uru Rākau about the forestry system and how the forestry sector can better contribute to the Government’s policy objectives and the New Zealand economy. This includes:
  - advising the Minister of Forestry on the forestry system<sup>1</sup>, as determined by the Advisory Group’s forward work programme, and agreed between the Minister and the Chair;
  - helping identify opportunities to improve the performance of the forestry system and working to enable Māori to realise their aspirations through greater participation in it;
  - providing advice on the Government’s *One Billion Trees programme* and associated policies; and
  - providing advice on future trends, risks and issues that may impact on the performance of the forestry system.
3. The Advisory Group will consist of no more than ten members and an independent Chair, selected for their expertise.
4. The Advisory Group does not replace other groups and aims to be synergistic and complementary to other groups.

### Expectations of Advisory Group members

5. Advisory Group members should be able to access existing representative bodies for input where required, and not duplicate or replace their activities. Group members will take a broad view of issues beyond specific sector interests.
6. Advisory Group members are appointed for three years. Advisory Group members are expected to:
  - attend each meeting, unless extenuating circumstances provide otherwise;
  - prepare adequately prior to each meeting by reading all papers provided to them;
  - ensure that forestry matters of significance are brought to the attention of the Advisory Group;
  - take a whole system view and not regard themselves as representatives or advocates for particular sectors or interests;
  - respect confidentiality of specific topics discussed at the meeting as requested by other members;
  - draft reports and comment on reports drafted by other members presented to the Advisory Group; and

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<sup>1</sup> The forestry system is defined here as the forestry value chain and its social, environmental, economic and cultural impact.

- declare any conflict of interest, or potential conflicts of interest, that may arise.

#### Expectations of the Chair

7. The Chair is appointed for three years. The Chair is expected to:
  - chair the meetings and organise the agenda with the assistance of the Secretariat;
  - work with the Minister of Forestry to agree on a forward work programme for the Advisory Group;
  - determine what action is appropriate if a member has a potential conflict of interest;
  - prepare a report to the Minister of Forestry, if required, after each meeting;
  - meet the Minister of Forestry to report on the activities of the Advisory Group, as required; and
  - maintain an effective working relationship with members of the Advisory Group.
8. The Chair may appoint a deputy Chair to assist with the running of the group.

#### Expectations of the Secretariat

9. The Secretariat will assist the Chair in running the Group. The Secretariat is expected to:
  - organize the meetings – including the liaison with the Advisory Group members to find a suitable time and location; and
  - draft the meeting pack and circulate it with the Advisory Group members at least three working days prior to each meeting;

#### External Advice

10. The Advisory Group may commission and seek external advice on specific matters, within its approved annual funding.

#### Quorum

11. A quorum shall be 6 members, including the Chair. If the quorum is not met, then the meeting will be re-scheduled.

#### Confidentiality and information

12. The Advisory Group members should assume that all information presented to the group, whether written or in oral form, is confidential and may not be made public.
13. If there is a desire to release the information, the Chair will seek agreement from anyone who supplied confidential information for confidentiality to be waived.
14. Where information is already in the public domain (through no fault of a member or observer), the confidentiality requirements do not apply to that information.
15. Members and observers must at all times comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 and keep information about identifiable individuals confidential.

16. All information provided to the Advisory Group will be treated as official information under the Official Information Act 1982 and, subject to the requirements of that Act, may be released to the public if there are no grounds for withholding it.
- If information is required to be released under the Official Information Act 1982 it will only be released to the extent necessary.
  - If the Ministry for Primary Industries/ Te Uru Rākau is considering releasing information under the Official Information Act 1982, it will attempt to consult with the person who provided the information before making a final decision on release.

#### Media and public forums

17. The Chair will speak on behalf of the Advisory Group for any official communication.
18. Advisory Group members may identify themselves as members of the Advisory Group but, unless prior agreement is received from the Chair and the Secretariat, must refrain from representing the Advisory Group to the media and at public forums.
19. An Advisory Group member may comment on the business of the Advisory Group consistent with agreed key messages but must notify the Chair and/or the secretariat before the event.

#### Conditions of Appointment

20. The Chair and the Advisory Group members are subject to the following conditions:
- Each member is appointed by the Minister of Forestry and reappointments are made for a duration at the discretion of the Minister of Forestry.
  - A replacement Chair or new members can be added or removed from the group by the Minister of Forestry, subject to Cabinet approval.
  - A member may resign from the Advisory Group by informing the Minister of Forestry in writing.
21. The Minister of Forestry will review these Terms of Reference in consultation with the Chair, the Advisory Group members and the Secretariat, as follows:
- at the end of the first year; and
  - as determined by the Minister of Forestry thereafter.