

New processes in the regulation of swamp kauri

MPI and its administration of the Forests Act regarding regulation of the swamp kauri industry has faced significant media interest this year with allegations that the export provisions of the Act have not been adequately enforced.

MPI has responded openly to these allegations. However, MPI also recognises that greater transparency in its regulatory operations is beneficial in order to increase public trust in the work it does around swamp kauri.

The environmental effects of swamp kauri extraction are controlled by the Resource Management Act through local council plans. Under the new processes changes all operators will inform councils of any and all extraction activity, regardless of where it takes place and whether or not it needs a resource consent. This will allow the relevant council to assess any local council planning requirements that need to be met as part of any extraction activities.

As part of the milling approval process MPI staff must also have inspected the extraction site before extraction begins and before milling approval will be given. This is to establish both the status of the land and the exact location of the extraction site. Understanding the status of the land from which swamp kauri timber is sourced is crucial to the correct application of the Forests Act in respect of swamp kauri. If the timber has been sourced from a site with indigenous vegetation, the inspection will allow an assessment of the natural values present and whether those values could be maintained following extraction.

Exporters will now notify 100 percent of all finished products for export approval with MPI and all exports of swamp kauri will be visually inspected to ensure they are within the rules. This will reduce any risk that unfinished swamp kauri products are exported in breach of the Forests Act.

Under the changes, MPI will also provide export companies with information to ensure their products are accurately advertised on overseas websites. This will ensure that any confusion about the status of swamp kauri products in international websites is avoided. International advertisements will also continue to be regularly monitored and advice will be given when advertisements are misleading or where they indicate a business could be breaking the rules.

MPI has committed to publishing quarterly reports of all our swamp kauri regulatory activity.

To assist with the extra workload associated with these changes MPI now have two staff members who are based in Northland.

Further information is available on the MPI website:
<http://www.mpi.govt.nz/exporting/forest-products/wood-and-wood-products/swamp-kauri/>

A summary of changes

- » Operators will take steps to ensure compliance with the laws around the management of swamp kauri by:
 - pre-notifying the Northland Regional Council of plans to extract;
 - pre-notifying the MPI of plans to extract;
 - notifying MPI of all finished products for export approval.
- » MPI is expanding the collection of data relating to milling and export by introducing swamp kauri specific forms for milling and export.
- » MPI will expand its inspection processes around applications to mill swamp kauri timber and applications to export swamp kauri timber.
- » MPI will publish quarterly reports of regulatory activities under the Forests Act relating to swamp kauri.
- » MPI will continue to monitor overseas trading sites and identify potential issues of non-compliance with the Forests Act and advise where possible to support accuracy in the advertising of their products.
- » An additional MPI staff member is now based in Whangarei to support the new measures.



CONTACT US

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Supporting professional relationships in the field

In working with you all on Forests Act matters, MPI staff are sometimes confronted with situations where the intentions of landowners and sawmillers are not always easily achieved within the limits of the Forests Act. The responsibility of MPI is to consistently and fairly implement the Act. MPI understands the responsibilities and obligations falling upon those wishing to harvest and mill indigenous timber from their land and continues to work closely with all operators to ensure their ambitions around harvesting indigenous timber are managed in accordance with the Act.

In recent months, there have been a number of instances where interactions between MPI staff and millers has been inappropriate.

MPI takes the safety of its staff extremely seriously and it is important that landowners and sawmillers understand the role of forestry officers in enforcing the law. MPI is committed to workplace safety and will involve the police if a situation is felt to warrant it.

Conversely, MPI is always happy to hear from anyone about their concerns with the legislation the implementation of it. Likewise, MPI will treat any concerns or complaints about the alleged actions of any staff seriously.

Forestry Officers are always ready to discuss in detail the reasons for any decisions reached around milling and

exporting. We ask however, that such matters are raised in a reasonable and courteous manner.

Should you have any matters or concerns to raise, you are invited to contact me at any time: Mat Bartholomew, Manager Sustainable Forest Management, 04-894-3430, Mat.Bartholomew@mpi.govt.nz



West Coast windthrow volumes harvested

Below are the harvest volumes as at 18 September 2015. An important statistic, not included in the table below, is that there have been no injuries since harvesting commenced.

Species	DOC Land Volume m ³	SHW/Local Authority Road Reserve Volume m ³	Private Land Volume m ³
Rimu	8340.7	655.2	2413.7
Matai	130.0	5.9	1284.3
Kahikatea	311.8	117.5	721.0
Totara	0	6.3	907.2
Miro	4.0	10.3	99.2
Hinau	0	0	2.5
Hard Beech	350.0	0	762.8
Red Beech	200.0	0	836.3
Silver Beech	153.1	0	380.9
TOTAL	9489.6	795.2	7407.9

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

MPI has recently had an upgrade to the website: www.mpi.govt.nz

For any forestry related information and application forms go to: [Growing and Producing > Forestry](#)