

The Forestry and Wood Products Economic Upgrade

With Labour's Economic Upgrade the forest and wood products industry will create skilled, well-paid jobs, and help grow New Zealand's economy by capturing a greater share of our resource value and keeping it at home.

Encourage investment in the processing component of the industry to move the focus from logs to higher-value products

- A 'tax deferral' for investment in plant and equipment in the forest and wood products industry, by means of an accelerated depreciation provision.

Promote leading-edge innovation through research and development (R&D)

- Reintroduce an R&D tax credit to encourage stronger private investment in high-quality R&D.
- Ensure that public science works to further develop wood-plastic composites.
- Work with the industry and BRANZ to develop building standards for wood construction to accommodate advanced wood construction technologies.

Develop a stronger domestic market for wood products

- Adopt a Pro Wood government procurement strategy for government-funded project proposals for new buildings up to four storeys high.

Provide greater security of raw product supply to give long-term confidence to processing investment

- Stabilise the price of carbon in New Zealand by requiring 50 per cent of all emissions surrendered to be New Zealand units rather than international units.
- Make suspensory loans available (repayable on harvest) to cover the costs for planting new forests, with the option of joint planting ventures with iwi.
- Introduce a legacy forests status to protect and renew our indigenous forests.
- Establish Forestry Taskforces for the long-term unemployed.
- Support iwi forestry clusters to analyse options for their land.

Provide business stability for the forest and wood products industry

- Complete the National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry.
- Formalise the government's approach to the forestry sector in a 'New Zealand Forestry Policy' document.

Ensure the sector is underpinned by suitable infrastructure and a skilled and safe workforce

- Support universities, polytechnics and wānanga, and the forestry ITO to further contribute to the industries and communities they serve.
- Introduce new regulations to protect forestry workers, support the Independent Forestry Safety Review, and introduce a corporate manslaughter law.
- Finish relevant roading development in forestry regions in order to make it easier to get wood from forest to plant.