



## ENVIRONMENTAL APPRAISAL NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

### **Greenplan passes green test**

The environmental consultancy, the Ecologic Foundation has just delivered its verdict on one of the country's leading forestry investment companies, Greenplan Forestry Investments.

The rigorous audit covered social, environmental and economic impacts this 10 year old forestry investment company has had on the neighbouring farmland and the wider King Country community where it's based.

"We believe we are the first privately-owned forestry investment company that has agreed to undergo a rigorous, third party environmental assessment of this magnitude," says Bruce Maunsell, Director for Greenplan.

Maunsell says that the terms of Ecologic's environmental audit were stringent, with Greenplan first having to agree upfront that all findings were to be published irrespective of the results.

"We think we have now set a benchmark for the wider industry by putting our practices under the scrutiny of an organisation that has wider environmental interests at heart," said Maunsell.

Maunsell said the main driver for their involvement in the audit was that a great many Greenplan investors are attracted to what they perceive to be an environmentally friendly investment. "While we haven't directly touted ourselves as such we wanted to get a 'warts and all' third party assessment on our practices to see if perception met reality," added Maunsell.

"If you are looking for a company at the responsible end of the spectrum of forestry investment companies then this is a good one," said Guy Salmon, Executive Director for the Ecologic Foundation.

Asked if there were any "black marks" Salmon said he had been disappointed to find trees had been planted right to the edge of streams in some of Greenplan's earlier plantings. This practice had now been changed to provide for stream protection buffer areas, and Ecologic had recommended a policy of planting natives along streams.

**The Audit:**

- Consultant Guy Salmon reviewed Greenplan sites, systems and practices and interviewed affected parties including tangata whenua, DOC, Regional and District Councils and Greenplan neighbours.
- Areas covered included impacts on soil, watercourses, biodiversity, climate, social impacts, and recreation. Liaison was undertaken with regulatory authorities such as Environment Waikato.
- Other factors included risks created due to drought, fire and wind, biosecurity and hazardous chemical risks and overall stakeholder concerns.

**Major findings:**

- Greenplan's forestry plantings have helped to reduce soil losses in the King Country - an area that is a particularly erosion prone part of New Zealand.
- The company has taken care to avoid planting up good farmland and has a policy of not clearing native forest.
- Greenplan promotes mixed land usage with relatively small forest plantations adjoining areas of indigenous forest reserves and farmland.
- From an environmental perspective, the net effect of Greenplan's land usage has been to enhance the quality of the region's soil, water and biodiversity, and to reduce risks of erosion, siltation, fire, flood and pest damage.
- Greenplan's activities have strengthened the local rural economy by providing an opportunity to get an economic return from land that is becoming marginal for pastoral production.

**Recommendations:**

- That Greenplan continues to enhance its stream protection activities, with an emphasis on developing the planting of indigenous species in permanent protective buffer strips along water courses.
- That as the time of timber harvest approaches; Greenplan seeks certification of its forests as well-managed forests, in accordance with the national standard which is expected to have been agreed at that time.
- It was disappointing to find that some of Greenplan's earlier plantings were planted to the edge of watercourses. Although these practices have now ceased Ecologic has recommended a policy of planting natives along streams.

"This audit endorses our practices and the sustainability of our overall operation. As well, we are happy with the perception of Greenplan as a 'green' investment," said Maunsell.

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[Copies of the environmental report are available on request from [invest@greenplan.co.nz](mailto:invest@greenplan.co.nz) ]

**About Greenplan:**

Based in Te Kuiti, Greenplan Forestry Investments employs a staff of 10 who currently manage over 60 investment partnerships, for over 5000 investors, owning 7000 hectares of New Zealand pine forests.  
<http://www.greenplan.co.nz>

**About the Ecologic Foundation:**

The Ecological Foundation is a foundation that works with the private sector to help companies improve their green practices. The foundation has prepared independent environmental impact reports for the likes of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Ministry of Fisheries, Westland District Council and Waste Management New Zealand.  
<http://www.ecologic.org.nz>

**For More Information:**

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