

## **MAORI PARTY SUPPORTS FOMA ACTION AGAINST THE CROWN**

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22 March 2007 - Maori Party co-leaders, Dr Pita Sharples and Tariana Turia, today moved to support the Federation of Maori Authorities in taking a case to the Waitangi Tribunal, seeking to challenge the Governments carbon credit confiscation and proposals to impose retrospective taxes for land conversion for other uses.

Article two of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, affirmed hapu authority and ownership rights of their resources, including forestry stated Mrs Turia.

The plan to confiscate carbon credits and impose a tax regime on forest owners, is another example of this Governments failure to behave in a way which is consistent with the articles of the Treaty.

Forestry is a vital resource to many hapu and iwi, and small Mum and Dad Maori landowners said Mrs Turia.

The Maori Party most definitely supports the pressing need to reduce carbon emissions, but penalising forest owners with this double-edged sword is not likely to bring about carbon-reducing behaviour. In fact, it seems likely to produce the exact opposite effect said Mrs Turia.

We support the case from forest owners to claim the credits that their forests will earn under the Kyoto Protocol said Dr Sharples.

For Government to take these credits, would amount to statutory theft. It would appear that the behaviour of this Government is coming to mirror the larceny of politicians from last century. In recent weeks we've seen the Government actively selling off interests in Maori land, the seabed for mining purposes, Maori fisheries, and now forestries said Dr Sharples.

The case to the Tribunal is consistent with our support for adopting a Genuine Progress Index, so that the carbon costs and benefits of activities such as forestry, can be fully known and accounted for; as opposed to GDP which only measures economic activity and growth growth which may threaten our environment said Dr Sharples.

The Maori Party also indicated its support for the NZ Forestry Industrys Six Point Plan.

The New Zealand Forestry Industry's Six-Point Plan

1. Remove the inequitable, retrospective 'deforestation cap'.
2. Allow land owners with Kyoto-qualifying forests (forests planted from 1990) - as well as those replanting non-Kyoto forests after harvest - to financially benefit from the value of the carbon their forests remove from the atmosphere.
3. Introduce broad-based carbon charges, ensuring that all emitters of greenhouse gases face the same opportunity costs.
4. Ensure that New Zealand's Kyoto policies have the best long-term outcomes for New

Zealand, even if they don't exactly mirror current Kyoto rules.

5. Develop a regime which puts a value on the environmental attributes of forestry, thereby encouraging investment in the sector.

6. Act immediately.