



**Media release from the Southern Wood Council
October, 2008**

Southern Wood Council elects new chairman

Grant Dodson is the new chairman of the Southern Wood Council, taking over from Matthew Hitchings.

Mr Dodson, who is Chief Executive of City Forests Ltd, was elected to the position at the council's recent annual meeting.

The Southern Wood Council represents all the major forest owners and the larger wood processing and manufacturing companies within Otago and Southland. It was formed seven years ago to promote and co-ordinate the sustainable economic development of the forest products industry in southern New Zealand.

Mr Dodson is keen for the council to continue to be a well respected and unified voice for the wood products industry in the lower South Island, across all issues affecting forestry.

"Matthew did a great job in bringing together the companies and the individuals that represent forestry here, providing the means for members to discuss and speak out on a wide range of issues affecting the future of the industry," he said.

"The council will continue to build on those foundations."

Mr Dodson personally sees a bright future for the industry in the region. "As a combined resource, the forestry industry is sustainable, well-managed, environmentally-friendly and hugely carbon positive. The products are in demand locally and overseas, and there are several factors now contributing to a positive outlook, including the upcoming tariffs on Russian log supply, the world's desire for sustainable products, bio-energy opportunities, and improved exporting conditions from a more favourable exchange rate and reduced international shipping costs."

The Southern Wood Council Inc was set up in 2001 to promote, encourage and coordinate the sustainable economic development of the forest products industry in Otago and Southland. One of a few truly independent groups of its type in New Zealand, it includes all the major forest owners within the region (ownership or management of over 140,000 hectares of production forests with an annual harvest of over 1.2 million m³ of wood), the larger wood processing and manufacturing companies,



the port authorities, and each of the three economic development agencies from local councils.

For further information contact Grant Dodson on 03- 467-7722.