

For Immediate Release

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd.

Sumitomo Forestry Chairman Ryu Yano Awarded New Zealand Order of Merit

Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. (President and Representative Director: Akira Ichikawa; Head Office: Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo) Chairman Ryu Yano has been awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit by the New Zealand government. The award ceremony was held on May 1 at the residence of the Governor-General in Wellington, New Zealand's capital city.

The New Zealand Order of Merit received by Chairman Yano was established on May 30, 1996 by Queen Elizabeth II of New Zealand (Queen Elizabeth II of England), and is "for those persons who in any field of endeavor, have rendered meritorious service to the Crown and nation or who have become distinguished by their eminence, talents, contributions or other merits." Although as a rule the order is normally bestowed on persons who are New Zealand citizens or members of the Commonwealth, Chairman Yano is awarded as an Honorary Member.

New Zealand has a thriving forestry industry, and timber is one of the country's main exports, comparable in size to its dairy product exports. As Japan's number one timber and building materials trading company, Sumitomo Forestry began handling New Zealand radiata pine¹ in the 1950s, and still boasts the leading import share among Japanese trading companies today.

In 1984, aiming to effectively utilize radiata pine, Sumitomo Forestry established a joint venture with a local company to manufacture the medium density fiberboard (MDF).² Nelson Pine Industries Ltd. (NPIL) became a wholly owned subsidiary of Sumitomo Forestry in 1993, and with three MDF production lines and a veneer and laminated veneer lumber (LVL)³ line, the plant possesses one of the world's largest MDF production capacities for a single site. NPIL's products are sold in Japan and overseas through the Sumitomo Forestry Group sales network.

Since 2006, Chairman Yano has also served as the Japanese chairman of the Japan Committee for the New Zealand-Japan Business Council, an organization that aims to strengthen economic ties between the two countries. Companies from both countries serve as members on the Council, working to develop closer economic ties and foster long-term development. Meetings are held annually with the venue alternating between New Zealand and Japan. The 38th meeting of the Council was held last year in Osaka.

■ Comment by Chairman Yano

I am truly honored to receive the New Zealand Order of Merit today.

My relationship with New Zealand spans more than 35 years, and during my time as chairman of the Japan Committee for the New Zealand-Japan Business Council, I have had the opportunity to make many dear friends—from New Zealand, naturally, and also from other Commonwealth countries such as Australia and Canada. I am deeply moved to have been nominated by the people I have had the pleasure of working closely with in a range of fields.

I would like to further commit myself to the expansion of relations between the two countries.

1. Native to California, U.S. Introduced to Southern hemisphere countries such as New Zealand and Chile in large-scale plantations.

2. A material with smooth, even surface quality and which has highly reliable dimensions. Used in home interiors such as flooring, doors, and stairs, as well as in furniture such as tabletops and countertops.

3. A wood material in which cut veneer panels are layered with grains aligned and affixed with adhesive. Used as a core material

for furniture and fittings, and as a building material in applications such as house foundations and rafters.

Reference

■ New Zealand Order of Merit

The Order of Merit consists of the following five categories (abbreviations in brackets) with a quota on the number of living recipients (Foreign residents are awarded as Honorary Members, with no limit on the number of recipients):

- Knight and Dame Grand Companion (GNZM)
- Knight and Dame Companion (KNZM or DNZM)
- Companion (CNZM)
- Officer (ONZM)
- Member (MNZM)

NPIL Managing Director Murray G. Sturgeon was also made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2003 for his services to industry.

■ Overview of NPIL

- (1) Name: Nelson Pine Industries Ltd.
- (2) Location: Nelson, New Zealand
- (3) Established: October 1984
- (4) Capital: NZD 45,500,000
- (5) Shareholders: Wholly owned subsidiary of Sumitomo Forestry Co., Ltd. (30% at time of foundation)
- (6) Managing Director: Murray G. Sturgeon
- (7) Business scope: Manufacture and sale of MDF, veneer, LVL