



31 October 2011

## BANZ MEDIA STATEMENT

### **Biofuels ready to ensure energy supply**

**With the disruption to energy supply throughout the North Island due to the leak in the Taranaki gas pipeline, business should look at the alternatives available to them for heat production. In particular locally sourced wood fuel which can ensure security of energy supply. New Zealand's producers of wood fuel can increase production throughout the country and overcome the problems of business being tied to a single and now aging gas supply network.**

Speaking today, Mr Rob Mallinson, Chair of the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand (BANZ) said there really is no better time to be considering wood fuel. *"Whilst our sympathies are with businesses that are affected by this unfortunate gas outage, all businesses should use this as a prompt to review how they can reliably meet their heat needs in the future. Businesses will no doubt be re-appraising their contingency plans and considering alternative sources of fuel, and there is a ready-made one right on their back door, in the form of wood fuel. Pulp mills and sawmills already rely on this, but the remainder of industry has been slow to recognise wood fuel as an alternative, despite huge volumes of biomass being available all around New Zealand. In Europe, thousands of businesses source their heat requirements from the combustion of wood chip or wood pellets, yet in New Zealand there seems to be a reluctance to make the investment required in the wood boilers to access this secure energy future. Wood fuel can supply the full range of commercial heat requirements, from relatively small heat users such as hotels, right up to the largest users such as meat and dairy processors."*

Mr Mallinson added *"This incident has high-lighted how dependant North Island businesses are on an ageing pipe, buried in land-slip prone terrain, as well as on our depleting natural gas resources. It makes sense for New Zealand businesses to take a closer look at a locally sourced, sustainable and reliable alternative. Wood fuel can make financial sense purely from a risk mitigation perspective. With the amount of sustainable forestry resources and wood residue streams generated all over the North Island, wood fuel is a very viable and low cost alternative. It also creates local jobs and is carbon neutral, so is a good long term financial decision, a good risk management decision and a good initiative for the local community."*

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## Notes to Editors

### 1. Media enquiries

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2. **The Bioenergy Association of New Zealand (BANZ)** - BANZ was established in 2001 to promote and coordinate the development of a bioenergy industry in New Zealand. BANZ provides a central focus point for liaison with Government agencies, the dissemination of information amongst the industry and long-term positioning of bioenergy into New Zealand's energy system. Members include anyone with a commercial interest in bioenergy - sawmillers, wood processors, energy suppliers, energy researchers, consultants, manufacturers and investors.
3. For more information on wood fuel refer to the Bioenergy Knowledge Centre at <http://www.eecabusiness.govt.nz/renewable-energy/wood-energy-knowledge-centre>