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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**FARM LAND BEING CONVERTED TO FORESTS IS REACHING EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS**

The conservation group 50 Shades of Green is appalled at the amount of pasture land being converted to forestry by overseas buyers.

Since 2011 almost 21,000 hectares worth \$89 million has been sold to foreigners to plant trees.

50 Shades of Green spokesman, Andy Scott, said the figures were a national disaster that would cost the country billions.

“For a start that is over 150 full time jobs lost forever in provincial New Zealand,” Andy Scott said. “In addition we’ve lost a \$90 million asset to offshore investors.

“The government needs to take stock and now. So far this year from just January to May we have lost 3,500 hectares worth \$22.7 million.

“If that isn’t a national tragedy what is.

“I’m surprised at the Labour Party and the Greens for turning the other cheek, National for ignoring the plight of the provinces and NZ First for selling our silver,” Andy Scott said.

Further comment:

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