



Title: “Katiki Point Pine Forest”

Description: Young pine plantation.

Photographer: Nicola Pye

Where, when: Katiki Point, Moeraki, June 2016

Sustainability? About 90% of Aotearoa New Zealand’s plantation forests are privately owned *Pinus radiata* forests. While the afforestation of the country is seen as an important tool in the race to slow climate change, fast growing, quickly harvested and exported trees such as pine have an impressive ability to accumulate carbon stocks at a much faster rate than slower growing native forests. But the pine forests are eventually cut down for export and a variety of uses, some of which release carbon back into the atmosphere. They are more of a short-term fix than long-term solution for binding carbon to mitigate climate change. However, research in 2019 found that the emission of monoterpenes by pine plantations is actually extending the life of methane in our atmosphere, which is significant when we are trying to reduce these levels as a country. Native trees do not emit the same levels of monoterpenes. (<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/397692/pine-plantations-extend-lifetime-of-methane-in-north-island-atmosphere>).

Focus on just one aspect of environmental sustainability, in this case carbon sequestration, is unwise. Ecology emphasises a need to think of whole systems and strive for multifunctional solutions to linked challenges. For example, see how dark it is under that young stand of trees in my photo – there is hardly any understory and very few additional plants can survive there. The pines do support high abundance of native insects and of insectivorous (insect eating) birds, but any birds that require fruit or a hole to nest in are virtually absent from the plantations. Conversion of large swathes of Aotearoa’s farmland to pine plantation squeezes people and communities out of the landscapes – you don’t need many people to grow pines compared to

looking after livestock, and what jobs the plantations generate are mainly held by people living in nearby towns and cities. Rural depopulation makes it all the harder for the remaining farming families to maintain their play centres, schools and community halls.

Photo notes: *Camera:* OM-D E-M1. *Lens:* Olympus M.Zuiko Digital ED 12-40mm F2.8 Pro. *Settings:* f/2.8 1/50 sec ISO200 40mm.

I really enjoy images that have an obvious receding effect achieved with lighting, which is exactly what the natural light filtering through these trees did. Making the image monochrome and increasing the detail made the texture of the tree trunks that much more vivid, which I think helps draw you into the image more, so that it almost has a fairytale feel to it – a dark and frightening place.

Digital specs: 3786 x 2354 pixels (6.55 MB).

Key words: *Pinus radiata*, environmental threats, afforestation, carbon, methane, biodiversity, Nicola Pye, Aotearoa, New Zealand, sustainability

Price: \$150 (incl. GST) for use of the digital image.

Visit www.ecosystemsphotography/sales for details & to order, and to get a quote if you want a high-quality print.

Donation: The price includes a \$100 donation to a sustainability organisation or project of your choice, or otherwise for *50 Shades of Green*.

I suggest that the donation goes to *50 Shades of Green* because of their advocacy of multifunctional agriculture and the “right tree in the right place”. <https://www.50shadesofgreen.co.nz/>. They are not against forestry – they just advocate for a diverse landscape that integrates farming, forestry and biodiversity care.

Image Ref: NP#007 (Please refer to this reference in orders and correspondence).

Nicola Pye
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