

**Media release – August 26, 2006**

**New Zealander elected as world landscape architecture leader**

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New Zealander Diane Menzies has been elected as the world landscape architecture leader, it was announced today.

Dr Menzies, of Christchurch, takes up her two year posting as president at the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) at a conference in Minneapolis in October. Over 4000 landscape architects are expected to attend the conference.

Today the NZ Institute of Landscape Architects said it was a great honour for Dr Menzies to be appointed president of the world body.

“Diane’s appointment will focus even greater world attention on the natural and cultural landscape values found in New Zealand and the skills of our New Zealand landscape architects,” NZILA president Renee Lambert said.

Dr Menzies, a commissioner with the Environment Court, was selected by delegates representing 60 countries belonging to the federation.

She said today she aims to make landscape architects more effective at the global level. She is intent on opening doors of international decision makers.

“I want to see landscape as an important agenda item for the World Bank, UNESCO and governments around the world,” Dr Menzies said.

“Sustainability, integrated water planning and community values are issues that have increasing importance in New Zealand and at a global level.

“We want to pursue a global landscape charter to protect landscape values, nature and culture to meet the diversity of landscapes throughout the world.

“We tend to recognise the special mountains and outstanding landscapes but cultural landscapes tell layers upon layers of stories about our history and they also merit recognition throughout the world.”

Dr Menzies will be discussing the charter concept in China and Siberia where she will be meeting landscape planners in the next two weeks.

“If people understand how our landscapes function, and how our communities value the places they live in, we will have a better chance of healthier environmental policies.

“I will be the first president from New Zealand and my Ngati Kahungunu heritage will be present as I take the opportunity to introduce a little of our culture to different places in the world. That is important to me.”

Dr Menzies is a life member and past president of the New Zealand Institute of Landscape Architects. She has been the secretary general of IFLA for four years and has served the profession in other activities.

She is also keen to start an international foundation for landscape architecture to support education and other projects and hopes that New Zealand benefactors will help with initial funding.

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**Photolink of Diane Menzies:**

<http://www.nzila.co.nz/dianemenzies.htm>

**Media advisory:** For an interview, comments, further information or photo shoot please contact Diane Menzies on 0275 322868 or Kip Brook at Word of Mouth Media NZ 0275 033855 or 03 3745426

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