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Media Release

## Foundations for further growth are not rock solid

New Zealand's economic progress could soon be put at risk unless there is improved access to river stone and quarry rock for the roading and construction industries.

That's the warning from the president of the Aggregate and Quarry Association, Bruce Taylor, as his industry heads into its annual conference next week.

Mr Taylor, who manages Fulton Hogan's quarrying and crushing operations in Nelson, says without a more secure supply of river stone and rock, there are serious implications for growth planning, especially in regions with high population growth.

"New Zealand's economy has been enjoying good growth and that's meant a per capita rise in the amount of aggregate (rock and stone) required for roading and construction. We are now using more than 8 tonnes per person each year. Within 15 years, it is projected to be 12 tonnes per capita. The question for our conference is: where will it come from?"

Mr Taylor said the projected increase in demand is as big as the current needs of Auckland.

"That means as much aggregate produced by 6 or 8 major quarries. Already, Auckland has to import one truckload in four of the aggregate it requires, mostly from Waikato or Northland, to meet current demand and before we begin to address further growth needs.

"The government is talking sustainability. So are we – it's the theme of our conference. Yet we are trucking aggregate 250km to and from building sites, road works depots and concrete plants. That's clogging roads, adding costs and burning unnecessary fuel. This is not sustainable, nor energy efficient," said Mr Taylor.

It is not simply an issue for Auckland and other growth regions including Wellington, Christchurch and Queenstown that are needing to import aggregate.

"As an industry, we find it difficult to get resource consents for quarry extensions and renewals, let alone develop a new site. That's despite huge advances in noise and dust minimisation and some genuine commitments to meeting our obligations to neighbours and the environment."

Mr Taylor said the Aggregate and Quarry Association was seeking to elevate the debate.

“As an industry, we know how important we are to our nation’s future. We can’t simply win that with better crushers and graders. We need to ensure that New Zealand’s decision-makers know what is at stake if we can’t provide the foundations for sustained economic growth.”

This year’s Aggregate and Quarry Association conference: “Sustainability of our Resources – Our Future” is being held in the Wellington Town Hall from July 11-13.



As well as 400 industry delegates there is a wider invitation to politicians, local and central government officials and media to attend.

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For conference details see [http://www.ioqnz.co.nz/conference.php?conf\\_id=8](http://www.ioqnz.co.nz/conference.php?conf_id=8)

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