

Media release

30 October 2019

Farmers now able to estimate how much carbon their tree blocks are absorbing

New Zealand farmers can now estimate how much carbon their tree blocks are sequestering thanks to a new addition to OverseerFM.

The carbon stock tool in OverseerFM uses data from the Ministry for Primary Industries' Carbon Look-up Tables to estimate the carbon sequestration potential for existing and future tree blocks on a farm.

The new tool adds to OverseerFM's existing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions analysis tool, which models the farm's biological emissions (methane, nitrous oxide) and carbon dioxide as well as product footprint.

"Farmers, rural professionals and the sector have told us they want a tool to help them make more informed decisions around the potential carbon sequestration impact of planting tree blocks on farm," says Caroline Read, chief executive of Overseer.

"The new feature provides an easy way of understanding the positive environmental impact of tree blocks and better representation of their farm systems.

"The carbon stock tool is a valuable addition to our OverseerFM GHG emissions analysis suite, which enables farmers to test different management approaches to reduce emissions on their farm and to increase their farm sustainability.

"The unique capability of OverseerFM enables a holistic approach to farm environment planning in that you can see the impact on Nitrogen, Phosphorus and GHG at the same time and avoid pollution swapping."

Overseer is also working with Scion to understand if different forest management practices will have a material impact on carbon stocks, she says.

"The addition of this tool represents the next step in our strategy to partner with the farming community and enable New Zealand farms to be more environmentally and economically sustainable.

"Our software provides farmers and their advisors with better information about nutrient management so they can make better decisions to lift environmental performance.

"Using OverseerFM means farmers can understand what they are emitting into the environment and test the impacts of farm management changes before they make them."

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Notes to editor

Overseer is an independent industry-good company owned by AgResearch Limited and the Fertiliser Association of New Zealand with investment from the Ministry for Primary Industries. OverseerFM connects farmers to science to support sustainable farm businesses and for better environment.

Frequently asked questions

What is the new carbon stock tool?

This tool uses the Ministry for Primary Industries' carbon look-up table data to help farmers estimate how much carbon could be captured and stored (sequestered) by existing and planned tree blocks. Once a farm is set up in OverseerFM, farmers and farm advisors can use the tool to understand if the positive environmental impact of tree blocks is likely to be significant.

What is a carbon look-up table?

Carbon look-up tables were developed for forestry accounting under the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). The tables provide pre-calculated average values of carbon stock by age and by region for *pinus radiata* and nationally for indigenous forest and other forest types. For more details, see, www.mpi.govt.nz/ets

How does Carbon Stock fit with OverseerFM's GHG tools?

The tool helps farmers make more informed decisions around whether existing or planned tree blocks will benefit their emissions profile. It is a great addition to OverseerFM's existing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions analysis tool, which estimates a farm's biological emissions (methane, nitrous oxide) and carbon dioxide as well as product footprint.

What does OverseerFM's GHG tool do for me?

OverseerFM's GHG tool models and provides analysis results for your farm's emissions for each greenhouse gas (methane, nitrous oxide and carbon dioxide) and its source e.g. enterprise, dung, fertiliser etc. This means you can see where GHGs are being produced in your farm system and helps you test the impacts of farm management changes before you make them, for example, changing when N fertilisers are applied, reducing stock numbers, introducing a stand-off pad or using urease inhibitors.

What's more, you can see the impact of different scenarios on GHG emissions and nutrient losses (Nitrogen, Phosphorous) at the same time.

I already have a farm account within OverseerFM. What do I need to do to see the carbon stock potential?

You simply create tree blocks and input a small number of data fields, such as forest type and age. Click here to view a short video on OverseerFM carbon stock tool. https://youtu.be/sb1XksH_M5I

Can I use this OverseerFM tree block carbon stock report for ETS reporting?

No. Its purpose is purely to provide you with the indicative carbon sequestration potential from your tree blocks (in tonnes) as part of your farm environment planning. If you would like to know more about the ETS for forestry, please visit www.mpi.govt.nz/ets or contact MPI at climatechange@mpi.govt.nz or 0800 25 46 28 and select option 3.

Does the new carbon stock tool include sequestration from soil, wetlands, riparian margins or forest management practice changes?

No. The tree block carbon stock report is stage one of our carbon sequestration reporting suite and focuses only on tree blocks. We are working to develop future options in line with scientific advances.

How do I get further information?

To contact us about the report, please email info@overseer.org.nz