

Submission NZ ETS review 2015/16

Forestry Technical note

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Questions F7 and F14

Settings in forestry accounting should change to accurately reflect the changes in carbon stocks so that any carbon credits claimed by forestry represent a genuine reduction in atmospheric carbon stocks

Changes in soil carbon are not currently reflected in the look up tables and these need to be changed.

Using data from 'A Literature Review of soil carbon under pasture, horticulture and arable land use' prepared for Agmardt in October 2009 it shows that 45percent of soil carbon is lost when land use is changed from pastoral use to forestry. This represents nearly 35 percent of the total carbon a forest is credited with removing from the atmosphere.

This represents a significant fraud with one in three carbon credits that are created represent no reduction at all of atmospheric carbon.

Data from the report shows;

Average content of grazing land of soil C is 105.7 tonnes /ha

Average content of exotic forest of soil C is 59.2 tonnes /ha

The 46.5 tonnes /ha of soil C lost equates to 170 tonnes of CO₂

Average CO₂ removals for a 30 year exotic forest after allowing for post harvest residue is 476 tonnes /ha

For every 476 tonnes of CO₂ removed in the wood 170 tonnes of CO₂ are returned to the atmosphere from the soil making the net reduction of a hectare of exotic forest only 306 tonnes /ha.

Paying a forest that only removes 306 tonnes/ ha for removing 476 tonnes/ha overstates the impact on the atmosphere of that forest and is a fraud on the environment and those who purchase carbon credits.

For the above reasons first rotation plantings of forest should be treated differently than subsequent rotations and the look up tables adjusted to reflect this.

