

Decarbonisation partnership to plant 650,000 pine trees in Taranaki

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A 650ha block of land in Taranaki will be planted with 650,000 pine trees to be used for carbon farming or rotational harvesting.

A carbon credit afforestation partnership is set to plant 650,000 pine seedlings on Taranaki hill country to offset carbon emissions.

Partnership manager, Dryland Carbon chief executive Anthony Beverley, said planting was expected to begin in mid August on 650ha of land east of Inglewood.

The partnership comprised of Air New Zealand, Genesis Energy, Z Energy and Contact Energy.

Beverley said the company bought 1220ha of which 650ha would be used to plant 650,000 pines.

The 1220ha was part of a larger property originally offered for sale by the owners, he said.

The remaining land, about 570ha, would be left to revert for the regeneration of native bush, while a small section of valuable river flats had been retained by the farm owner for grazing.

Beverley said the land bought for planting the pines would be used either for carbon farming, or rotational harvesting.

The property on Otaraoa Rd is approximately 30km from Port Taranaki, which gave easy access to transport logs for export.

“The 650ha is marginal land suitable for pine planting which Dryland Carbon bought the back end of the original property,” he said.

“We’re only interested in planting the marginal land as the flats are good farming land, and the rest of the property will be allowed to regenerate back to native bush.”

Beverley said Dryland Carbon's mandate was to generate carbon credits for the partnership which had significant carbon surrender obligations, but it was not solely a carbon farmer.

The Taranaki property is one of five bought by the partnership for rotational harvesting and carbon farming.



A sixth property was destined as a permanent exotic forest, he said.

A tweet earlier this week commented the Dryland Carbon partnership was planting 20m trees on the site. But that was incorrect, Beverly said.

It would require 20,000ha to plant that amount of pine trees.

Trees That Count chief executive Adele Fitzpatrick said the amount of pine trees to be planted was “still too many.”

“Native regeneration was great but it is still a large number of pine trees being planted and that is the issue,” she said.

“The land should be planted solely in native trees.”

Pine plantations were a mono-culture of an exotic species which sucked up a lot of water and had a shallow root structure not suitable for erosion prone land, she said.

“Pines don’t attract bird life and are susceptible to fires and flooding.”

Source: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/business/300048395/decarbonisation-partnership-to-plant-650000-pine-trees-in-taranaki>